THE THEATRE GUILD
presents

CELESTE HOLM

THIRD BEST SPORT

A New Comedy by ELEANOR & LEO BAYER

with ANDREW DUGGAN
WILLIAM PRINCE JUDSON LAIRE

Directed by MICHAEL HOWARD

THIRD BEST SPORT

BY ELEANOR AND LEO BAYER

★

A COMEDY IN THREE ACTS

★

DRAMATISTS
PLAY SERVICE
INC.

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THIRD BEST SPORT was first presented by The Theatre Guild at the Ambassador Theatre, New York City, on December 30, 1958. It was directed by Michael Howard, and the set was designed by Marvin Reiss. The cast was as follows:

BELLBOY	Spofford Beadle
HELEN SAYRE	Celeste Holm
DOUGLAS SAYRE	Andrew Duggan
CHUCK ROBBINS	James Karen
ARTHUR UNDERHILL	Howard Wierum
AMY UNDERHILL	Jane Hoffman
MARGE ROBBINS	Parker McCormick
JOHN WAGNER	Judson Laire
DR. JONAS LOCKWOOD	William Prince
MYRA MCHENRY	Irene Cowan
SPENCER MCHENRY	Joseph Boland

SYNOPSIS OF SCENES

The action is contemporary and takes place in the living room of a hotel suite in Palm Beach, Florida.

ACT I

SCENE 1: 11:00 A.M., a day in March.
SCENE 2: Later that afternoon.

ACT II

SCENE 1: The next morning.
SCENE 2: That evening.

ACT III

Later that evening.

THIRD BEST SPORT

ACT I

SCENE 1

A day in March—11:00 A.M.
When the curtain goes up the stage is empty. We see the living room of the Sayres' suite in a luxurious Palm Beach hotel. It is a mild morning and the sun is pouring through the open sliding doors across the rear wall of the set. The doors lead to a terrace. Beyond that we can see the ocean. U. L. *are double doors leading to the corridor,* D. L. *the door to the bedroom.* D. R. *is a door to the pantry. A sofa is* R. C., *with a table behind and an end table* L. *of it. An armchair stands* D. R. *A desk is against the* R. *wall, above the pantry door, the telephone is on desk (with a long cord); in the wall above the desk is a pass-through to the pantry. A chair is just* L. *of the desk. A planter full of plants stands in the corner formed by the* R. *and upstage walls. A seat is just* L. *of the planter, in front of the doors to the terrace. A small round table with a chair on either side of it stands* L. C. *Another chair with an end table below it is* D. L. *A console table stands against the* L. *wall above the bedroom door. A mirror is over the table. There is a platform* U. L. *and* C.; *this platform is raised one or two steps above the rest of the room, and has a railing running along the downstage edge in front of* U. L. *doors. The platform has no railing on its* C. *section.*
As the curtain rises we hear some voices talking off L. *After a moment a Bellboy opens the doors* U. L. *and comes in with a lady's suitcase, an overnight case and a hat case. He also carries a man's two-suiter and an attache case. As the Bellboy puts the bags down* D. L., *the off stage*

voices burst forth with recognition as they see Douglas Sayre and his brand new wife coming down the hall. Shouts of "so you've got your bride with you," etc., are heard above the general excitement. The Bellboy leaves the bags and goes into the bedroom D. L. *as Doug carries Helen across the threshold* U. L. *As Doug enters with Helen in his arms—she has her hand over her eyes. In the doorway he says "Now open them wide." She uncovers her eyes and he puts her down. The voices go into "Here comes the bride" and then fade out. Helen is a startlingly attractive woman—a woman who burns brightly, a stand-out in any environment. She wears a traveling suit with convention badge prominently displayed and carries a coat, bag and gloves. Doug is a large well-built man about forty and is General Manager of the Norse Wagner Company. He has worked hard for his success and has proven to be a brilliant businessman. His manner and voice suggest great vitality. As he puts Helen down her amusement at the off stage kidding subsides and her eyes widen as she takes in the room. Doug closes the doors* U. L. *behind them.*

HELEN. (*Up* C. *near window.*) What splendor! Oh, Doug—I don't feel married here—I feel kept!

DOUG. (*Crosses in to her.*) You are married all right. (*Touches her badge.*) I've got you tagged to prove it. "Mrs. Douglas Sayre —Norse Wagner Company."

HELEN. (*Admiring the room.*) This is right out of the Arabian Nights!

DOUG. Wait until you see these Palm Beach nights—they hang the stars right out the window. (*She goes out on the terrace* C.)

HELEN. Oh, Doug! What a view! Let's have cocktails out here tonight. (*Bellboy comes back from bedroom and is picking up the woman's suitcase and overnight case to take them to the bedroom.*)

DOUG. That's a date. (*To Bellboy.*) You can leave the rest of the bags here.

BELLBOY. Yes, sir. (*Takes the bags to bedroom. Doug crosses* D. L., *lays his two-suiter bag down to open and takes out a suit during the following.*)

HELEN. (*Examining planter in corner of room, up* R.) Our own little jungle!
DOUG. What are you doing?
HELEN. Looking for snakes. (*Bellboy comes back from bedroom. Helen goes to pass-through* R. *over desk, opens* D. S. *shutter to peek in—then exits* D. R. *to the pantry.*)
BELLBOY. Keys are on the dresser, sir.
DOUG. (*Handing him suit.*) Have this pressed for tonight, will you?
BELLBOY. Yes, sir.
DOUG. (*Tipping Bellboy.*) Here you go.
BELLBOY. Thank you, sir. (*Starts to go—up steps* L.)
HELEN. (*From pantry.*) Oh, Doug! (*Refrigerator DOOR SLAM off* R.) Look—look what I found in the ice box! (*Enters with a pitcher of orange juice on a tray with three glasses.*) Fresh. Fresh squeezed orange juice. (*Crossing below sofa, she places tray on end table* L. *of sofa.*)
BELLBOY. Compliments of the management. (*Exits* U. L.—*closes door. Doug has taken a sheaf of messages and telegrams from his pocket and is examining them below round table* L.)
HELEN. (*Going to him.*) Those the messages that were in your box?
DOUG. Yeah. Everybody in the industry is down here. They've all got something urgent on their minds—urgent cocktail parties —— (*Tosses messages on the round table,* L.) To hell with it. They can wait.
HELEN. (L. C.) Company plane, limousine at the airport, now this. Now I know what it's really like to be married to a Captain of Industry —— (*Embraces him.*)
DOUG. Hey, you know I just realized we've been married for two weeks and this is the first time we've been in a hotel room together.
HELEN. That make you feel wicked? (*They kiss.*)
DOUG. Mmmm —— (*They kiss.*)
HELEN. (*Crosses up in* C. *window.*) Oh, Doug, feel that air ——
DOUG. (*He follows her to below platform.*) I'm just beginning to thaw out.—How would you like to go sailing tomorrow?
HELEN. (*Up* C. *on platform.*) Could we?
DOUG. Sure. I'm going to try to duck out of most of these meetings down here.

HELEN. Let's go for a swim right now. Come on—just a quick one before lunch.

DOUG. All right, why not? (*She crosses down* L. *to her hat box. He takes off his jacket, throws it over chair* R. *of round table.*) I bet nobody's ever tried this before, combining a convention with a honeymoon. We'll show 'em how it's done.

HELEN. After those two weeks in Indiana, all those company parties, all that charcoal gray slush, I didn't want to miss this. (*Rises and Doug crosses* D. *to her.*) Here we can lie in the sun—and swim—and talk—(*They kiss.*) and —— Oh, we forgot to look at the bedroom! (*She runs off to the bedroom* D. L.) All white satin and flounces! (*Doug is unpacking his bathing suit from suitcase on floor, down* L., *and he finds a bottle of Vodka in the suitcase. This reminds him of the orange juice, he holds up Vodka bottle, dropping his swimming trunks on round table.*)

DOUG. (*Calls to her.*) Darling, would you like some orange juice? (*Goes to end table, puts Vodka down and pours two glasses of orange juice.*)

HELEN. (*Coming back, crosses* C. *to him.*) Sure. Straight. (*He hands her juice and they lift their glasses in a toast.*) A nous!

DOUG. To us.

HELEN. It loses a little in the translation, doesn't it?

DOUG. I can't believe my luck. How was I ever able to pry you loose from the glamorous publishing business? (*Helen crosses* L.)

HELEN. (*Puts her glass on round table.*) Oh, come on. Have you ever got an exalted idea of my job. There were six of us readers in one grubby little office. (*Crosses to hat box on floor* L.)

DOUG. Bet you were the prettiest one of the bunch. (*He puts his glass down on round table.*)

HELEN. No, I was the most cowardly. I couldn't bear to turn in a bad report on a manuscript, so I'd call the writer up and ask him over for spaghetti and clam sauce. (*She unpacks four books from her hat case.*)

DOUG. You never put on a spread like that for me.

HELEN. (*Crosses* R. *to desk.*) Whoever heard of spaghetti for breakfast? (*Puts the books on desk.*)

DOUG. (*Gets his camera and roll of film from two-suiter bag. Crosses* U. *and sits* R. *of round table.*) Writers, eh? Did they come courting you in fancy literary English?

HELEN. Occasionally. (*Crosses to back of sofa. She sees a gift*

basket of fruit on table behind sofa and picks up the tag.) "Best wishes to the First Lady of Norse Wagner?"

DOUG. You're it. (*Takes film out of wrapper.*)

HELEN. (*Crosses to back of his chair, puts her hand on his shoulder.*) Doug, I'm not sure I know how to be a boss' wife.

DOUG. The only function of the boss' wife is to keep the boss happy.

HELEN. (*Moves behind round table.*) You make it sound so easy. (*A bit* L. *of table.*) When you first brought me to Westminster I couldn't tell one person from another. It was as if they'd all been stamped out with a great big cookie cutter. Nobody ever disagrees, nobody ever says anything unless everyone else says it too.

DOUG. (*Puts film in camera.*) That's their first commandment. "Thou shalt not stick thy neck out." But you don't have to get mixed in with the social life unless you want to. I never did. (*Helen has started to unbutton front of her dress, then goes into the bedroom to change during the following.*)

HELEN. (*At bedroom door.*) So that's why you were never captured by any of those Westminster, Indiana, wenches. (*Exits* D. L.)

DOUG. You've seen them. They're not the kind of wenches I'd want in my wicked Florida bedroom.

HELEN. When did you know you wanted me?

DOUG. The first time I saw you—at that cocktail party—all blond and shiny in your what-the-hell dress. (*He finishes the film business, puts camera back in case and leaves it on the round table. Helen comes back from the bedroom wearing his robe—obviously several sizes too big for her.*)

HELEN. (*Crosses to below round table.*) How do you like this?

DOUG. I think it does a little too much for you. (*Helen picks up her glass of juice and passes him on her way to the sofa and he pats her rear on word "lumpy."*) I'd always thought that most career women were rather lumpy.

HELEN. I'd always thought most business (*He rises.*) men were rather stuffy.

DOUG. You let me take you to dinner!

HELEN. (*In front of sofa.*) I was hungry.—Bet you can't guess the first moment I was fascinated with you.

DOUG. (*Crosses* R. *to sofa.*) The first time you took a good long look?

HELEN. With you it had to be a long look!—(*They sit sofa,*

Helen R. *side, Doug* L. *side. He rolls up her left sleeve during the following.*) No, it was that night in my apartment when you called one of your engineers.

DOUG. About the Turbojet Control? (*Rolling sleeve.*)

HELEN. That's right.

DOUG. The test model's being shipped down here. You'll see what I was talking about.

HELEN. The sound of your voice—you were so intense. Suddenly I just wanted to be wherever you were.

DOUG. Even though it meant giving up the kind of life you had in New York?

HELEN. I liked my life—my own doorkey, my own desk, my own bank account ——

DOUG. So damned independent!

HELEN. That first night you brought me home I was unlocking my door and I looked down at my key and I thought—you're an inadequate little piece of metal. (*She looks at Doug.*) God, I wanted you to call —— (*The* U. L. *doors open and Chuck enters. Chuck Robbins is the Assistant General Manager of the Norse Wagner Company. He is in his early thirties, an eager beaver, extremely ambitious, already putting on weight from too much eating and drinking with the customers. He takes himself very seriously. He is laden with a portable typewriter, catalogs, a cloth banner, files and pencils. When he sees them he stops short.*)

DOUG. Hello, Chuckle!

CHUCK. (*To upper end of platform railing, then crosses down back of round table.*) Oh! You're here! Hello—hello, Mrs. Sayre.

HELEN. Hi, Chuck.

CHUCK. Have a nice trip down?

DOUG. (*Rises and crosses up to Chuck.*) Fine. (*Chuck starts to unload his stuff around the room: lays a small pile of catalogs and pencils on round table.*)

CHUCK. Gee whiz, Doug, you should have let me know you got in. We've got tons of things to do. Whole bunch of people been asking for you. (*Chuck crosses to back of sofa table.*)

DOUG. (*Follows Chuck.*) Why are you bringing all that stuff in here?

CHUCK. Gee, Doug, I thought you knew. We've got to use this room for Company Headquarters.

DOUG. What about the old man's suite? (*Helen rises, crosses* R. *to back of sofa table.*)

CHUCK. Well, Doug, Mr. Wagner assigned your suite for Company business. He thought it would help to keep you in touch.

DOUG. (*Crosses* R. *to desk for phone.*) Wait a minute—I'm going to phone him ——

CHUCK. His layout is even smaller. We can't use that.

HELEN. (*Still has juice glass in her hand. Removing coat, purse and gloves from sofa table.*) I'll get this out of your way.

CHUCK. (*Puts rest of catalogs on sofa table then moves* L. *to round table.*) Listen, Doug, Monarch Tool and Dye called. Kramer Machines are —— (*He picks up Doug's bathing suit from round table.*) Gee, I've got to use this table —— (*Helen crosses to below* R. *end of sofa, then goes over* L. *and picks up camera and juice glass from round table, takes bathing suit from him and starts vaguely towards the bedroom with arms loaded. Underhill's entrance stops her over* L.) Kramer Machines wants to see you. Boys are in the lobby waiting for you to check the exhibit —— (*Crosses to back of sofa.*)

DOUG. Helen and I are going to the beach. You check it for me. And tell Kramer Machines I'll give them a ring later on. (*From off stage in the hall* L. *we hear Underhill calling boisterously to some friends.*)

UNDERHILL. (*Backing into room.*) Ha! Ha! I'll look for you in the bar. We'll hoist a few!

1ST OFF-STAGE VOICE. Fine, boy. We'll do that! (*Chuck puts rolled banner on sofa table, then puts large fruit basket in Doug's hand.*)

UNDERHILL. (*Turns into room and sees Doug.*) Hello, Doug! How have you ——

2ND OFF-STAGE VOICE. Hey, Art!

1ST OFF-STAGE VOICE. Hey, Art—look who's here!

DOUG. (*To Helen.*) It's like going on a honeymoon with your in-laws. (*Chuck puts typewriter case on desk then moves back to sofa table and arranges catalogs in two piles.*)

UNDERHILL. (*Looks back off stage.*) Harry! Howsa boy! Long time no see! (*Back to Doug.*) You look great, boy!

2ND OFF-STAGE VOICE. Not since last year.

UNDERHILL. (*Looking off again.*) Hey, Harry ——

2ND OFF-STAGE VOICE. Yeh?

UNDERHILL. Bring the little woman along, or are you here for a good time? (*Loud laughs off-stage and 2nd Voice says, "She's here." Arthur Underhill moves on into the room. He is about fifty, heavy-set, double chinned. He is the General Sales Manager of the Norse Wagner Company. He loves his job and was made for it—extroverted, gregarious, a back-slapper.*) Doug! Long time no see —— (*Crosses down from platform* U. L. *and shakes hands with Doug* U. C.)

DOUG. Look, Art, we're ——

UNDERHILL. (*Sees Helen* D. L.) Now I bet this is the little lady we've been hearing so much about in Chicago. (*Crosses down* L. *to Helen, who is at bedroom door.*)

DOUG. (*Starts to cross* D.) Darling, I want you to meet ——

UNDERHILL. (*Going to her with hand outstretched.*) Art Underhill, General Sales Manager, Chicago Headquarters. I'm a couple of weeks late, but congratulations. (*Pumps her hand and gets a look at her in bathrobe, arms loaded.*) Say, what are you up to? Stealing the clothes off the old man's back already? (*Looking around the room,* C.) Say, this is a mighty nice suite we've got this year.

HELEN. Thank you. (*Chuck gets banner from sofa table, crosses upon platform* L. *to hang it over rail.*)

DOUG. (*Puts fruit basket out of way on platform* U. C.) We were just changing.

HELEN. We can hardly wait to get into that ocean.

UNDERHILL. Thought you'd play hookey, eh, boy? Wouldn't I love to. (*Chuck suddenly unrolls banner. Seeing banner.*) Say, that's nice, Chuck. (*Sits in chair* R. *of round table.*) Boy, I do more work at a shindig like this than I do in my own office.—Oh, well, all work and no play makes Jack! (*Chuck has remained upon platform smoothing out the banner. Helen laughs at Underhill's joke.*)

CHUCK. (*To Doug.*) That's good. (*Helen exits* D. L. *to unload her arms.*)

UNDERHILL. Say, Doug, this looks like the greatest convention ever. Just did a little business in the lobby. Re-order from Schaeffer-Gordon.

CHUCK. I had breakfast with a couple of the guys from McHenry Motors.

DOUG. (*Crosses down to close his suitcase.*) They say anything about the Turbojet Control?

CHUCK. (*Crosses down from platform to front of rail, fusses with banner.*) I couldn't find out a thing. (*Doug takes Helen's hat case to bedroom.*) McHenry is away on a vacation. They said he chartered a boat in Miami—he's cruising up and down the coast.

UNDERHILL. Doug, did you pick up all those messages that were in your box? (*Doug has taken Helen's hat case to the bedroom. He comes flying out of the bedroom as he realizes what has been said.*)

DOUG. Chuck, did you say Spencer McHenry is cruising out there?

CHUCK. (*Nodding.*) While we're rolling around in broken glass waiting for him to give us that order. (*Crosses u. c. and out on terrace.*)

DOUG. Why the hell didn't you say something about it? If he's out there we've got to get hold of him.

CHUCK. (*Crosses up* C. *and out to* R. *of Doug.*) He's on a boat, Doug. How're we going to reach him?

DOUG. Any boat big enough to hold McHenry is big enough to have a ship to shore phone.

UNDERHILL. (*Rises, crosses up* C. *to Doug.*) Are you thinking what I'm thinking? (*Doug has suddenly become the business man in action.*)

DOUG. You bet your life I am. Chuck, get the Marine Operator on the phone. (*Chuck goes to phone, picks it up.*) Art, we've got to get him here.

UNDERHILL. Throw a party, show him a hell of a big time and get him to sign on the dotted line! (*Helen comes on from the bedroom to* L. C.)

CHUCK. (*At desk.*) Doug, shouldn't I check with Mr. Wagner first?

DOUG. (*Moving* D. S.) No! I'll do that—later. (*Chuck takes phone from desk and sits in armchair* D. R. *to work on the call.*)

HELEN. Doug ——? What's happening?

DOUG. (*Crosses down to Helen, then passes by her to get attache case* D. L.) Oh, honey, listen—I'm going to be a little bit busy. (*He gets his attache case, gives it to Underhill.*) Art, there's a cost analysis in here. Will you get it out and have a few extra copies made. (*Underhill sits on* R. *end of sofa—goes through case.*)

HELEN. (L. C.) Is there anything I can do to help?
DOUG. (L. C.) No, honey, I don't think so.
HELEN. Then we can't go to the beach?
DOUG. Damn it, I *am* sorry, darling. This is that big Turbojet deal I was phoning about from your apartment. Been working on it for two years and this may be a break for us. (*Goes to Underhill, who is searching through the attache case on sofa.*) Find it, Art?
UNDERHILL. No, not yet. (*Doug sits on* C. *of sofa, takes case from Underhill, locates papers.*)
HELEN. (C., *a little dazed.*) Oh—I see ——
UNDERHILL. You'll have plenty to do, Mrs. Sayre. The girls are real fireballs at organizing things. Shopping tours, sight-seeing trips, visit to a praline factory ——
HELEN. Well ——
UNDERHILL. And I understand there's a trip to a genuine swamp!
HELEN. Swamp ——?
CHUCK. (*From phone.*) Marge just eats that up. (*Doug gives folder to Underhill.*) Cover phone
UNDERHILL. My Amy's a great little mixer. Once she gets hold of you, you won't have a minute to call your own.
CHUCK. (*Rises.*) The official women's committee luncheon is today, Mrs. Sayre. I'm sure you wouldn't want to miss that! (*On phone.*) Yes, operator. No—not Mac—Mc—Mc ——
DOUG. Let me have it, Chuck. (*Takes phone from him, sits* D. R., *Chuck stands* U. S. *of him.*) Listen, operator, the only thing we know is the man who chartered the boat. His name is Spencer J. McHenry—M-c-H-e-n-r-y —— All right, how long do you think that will take? (*Still listening on phone.*) Chuck, better go see if you can find the old man. (*Chuck starts* D. S. *towards door, bumps into Helen.*) Chuck—Chuck—wait—I'll go along with you —— (*Hands phone to Underhill.*) Art, you hang on to this, will you ——?
UNDERHILL. (*On phone.*) Yes, ma'am. We're holding on. Okay, you let me know.
DOUG. (*To Chuck. On his way out.*) Good thing we had the Turbojet Model sent down. (*Takes his jacket from chair, puts it on as he follows Chuck out* U. L. *doors.*) I'm going to go check the baggage room. (*Chuck and Doug exit, leaving doors open. Helen looks woebegone, left out of things. She looks at the departing*

men, turns to Underhill, smiles, shrugs her shoulders, then goes off D. L. *into the bedroom and quietly closes the door. Underhill moves up to the desk with the phone.)*

UNDERHILL. (*On phone.*) Operator—we'll be ready to take that call at 4 o'clock. Thanks. (*He hangs up, puts phone on desk, looks over where he last saw Helen. Surprised she is gone, then begins to sing "By the Beautiful Sea" to himself as he starts off on platform towards* U. L. *doors. Marge and Amy enter. Marge is a pretty, young matron and the wife of Chuck Robbins. She is very, very anxious to do the right thing, and she is never in doubt about what the right thing is. It is the thing that will help Chuck get ahead in the Company. She not only feels that Chuck belongs to Norse Wagner, but that she and their children do too. She is wearing that female convention uniform, print dress, hat, gloves and a convention badge. Amy is the wife of Art Underhill. She is about fifty, fussily, but expensively, dressed and wears a convention badge. She is a realist and what she herself would describe as a "good mixer." Amy knows the score and has settled for it. She never fools herself.*)

AMY. Hi, honey! (*Crosses to* U. C. *Gives him a peck on the cheek.*)

UNDERHILL. Hi, hon ——

MARGE. (*On platform by doors.*) Hello, Mr. Underhill.

UNDERHILL. Hello, Marge!

AMY. Art, where is she, Doug's wife? We came to pick her up for the luncheon.

UNDERHILL. (*Indicating bedroom.*) She's in there. I guess she's dressing. (*To Marge.*) Say, kid, you look like a million!

MARGE. Thank you. (*Crosses down steps* L.)

UNDERHILL. (*Moves* D. S.) How's that cute little girl of yours?

MARGE. (*Crosses to below round table.*) Oh, she's just fine, and we've had another baby since we saw you last. A boy. Born in February. I figured it out that way so I could come to this convention in March. (*Underhill laughs and sits* L. *end of sofa.*)

AMY. (*Checking her watch. Crosses down* C.) Listen, Marge, it's getting late. Maybe we ought to let her know we're waiting.

MARGE. (*Goes toward bedroom door and calls.*) Mrs. Sayre? (*No answer.*) You—hoo—Mrs. Sayre?

HELEN. (*From bedroom.*) Be out in a minute, Marge. (*The following is played very much aware of Helen in the next room.*)

AMY. Marge, what's she like?
MARGE. Amy, I told you—she's nice.
AMY. I know, but what's she like?
MARGE. (*Front of round table, with a glance at the bedroom door.*) Frankly, it would take me all day just to tell you the half of it.
AMY. (*Front of round table.*) Now, Marge, what do you mean?
MARGE. I can't say anything around Westminster. You never know who it'll get back to—but I've just been bursting to talk to *somebody*. Listen, do you know what she did? She went over to Andre's to have her hair done—in a ski suit!
AMY. In a ski suit?
MARGE. And she turned down two straight invitations to Carry Bickford's, and you know what *that* means!
AMY. They'll never get asked again.
MARGE. I invited her to join the bridge club and the bowling club and guess what?
AMY. What?
MARGE. She doesn't know how to play bridge and she doesn't know how to bowl!
AMY. My God!
UNDERHILL. Don't go into a state of shock. She'll learn.
AMY. We heard she had a job with a publishing house. She must have brains.
MARGE. Maybe she had brains in New York. (*Helen enters in a beach costume, skirt over her shoulders and beach bag and sunglasses in her hand. The girls stop talking abruptly.*)
HELEN. Hi, Marge!
MARGE. (*She sees her attire.*) Mrs. Sayre! The Women's Committee Luncheon is rather—formal.
UNDERHILL. (*Jumping up.*) Mrs. Sayre, I want you to meet my wife—Amy. (*Helen and Amy shake hands.*)
AMY. How do you do?
HELEN. How do you do? Doug's told me a lot about you.
AMY. I've heard a—a lot about you too.
HELEN. I hope you won't mind if I run along—(*Starts for the terrace.*) I can hardly wait to get out in that sun. (*Crosses up* C. *to terrace platform.*)
MARGE. (*Crosses up a bit.*) Mrs. Sayre—what about the Women's Committee Luncheon? I'm a hostess.

AMY. (*Crosses up to Helen,* C.) There'll be 1200 of us wives the Palm Tree Patio.
HELEN. 1200? Oh, well, then you'll never miss me. (*She goes on the terrace,* R.)

FAST CURTAIN

ACT I

SCENE 2

Later that afternoon.
At rise, U. L. *doors are open,* D. L. *door closed. Underhill is alone on stage. He is seated* D. R. *reading the "Wall Street Journal." Doug enters, looks at his watch as he comes down steps* L.

DOUG. If that operator's on the ball—we should be in contact with the McHenry boat in the next few minutes. Chuck not back yet? (*Doug goes to below round table where he looks through messages left from last scene.*)
UNDERHILL. Haven't seen him. (*Crosses to Doug carrying paper.*)
DOUG. The Turbojet model's been sitting around at the airport all afternoon. I asked Chuck to pick it up.
UNDERHILL. I hate to throw any curves at you, but—Man to Man, there's something I want to tell you.
DOUG. Shoot.
UNDERHILL. Well, your wife didn't go to the Women's Committee Luncheon. She didn't show up for the Canasta Tournament.
DOUG. If I know Helen—she's out on that beach.
UNDERHILL. That's right, boy. I'm telling you those girls are really racing their motors.
DOUG. Forget it, Art. Let 'em stew. We've got other things to think about. (*Chuck enters* U. L., *carrying model in wooden box.*)
CHUCK. Here she is, Doug. (*Doug turns to him, snatches the model from him over the railing and puts it on* U. S. *side of round table. Underhill puts paper on* D. S. *side of round table and moves to* R. *side of table.*)

DOUG. It's about time.

CHUCK. (*Crosses down steps* L. *to* L. *of round table.*) I had them uncrate it. (*Doug takes top off box and padding, which reveals the model. Doug, Chuck and Underhill are grouped around the table admiring the Turbojet Control Model. It is a very intricate looking gadjet—a gleaming silver—inside a clear plastic case about twice the size of a shoe box.*)

UNDERHILL. (*At* R. *of round table.*) This is all we've been talking about in Chicago.

CHUCK. It's good, Doug. It's good.

UNDERHILL. It's terrific.

DOUG. Isn't that a box of tricks that's going to make McHenry sit up and beg!

UNDERHILL. I have to hand it to you, boy. When you think, you think big!

CHUCK. Big ideas can give you big ulcers. (~~*Chuck takes box top and padding from chair* R. *of round table and puts it on platform* U. R.~~)

DOUG. I wonder what's keeping John? He hasn't seen this thing yet.

CHUCK. (U. R. *on platform.*) He's coming. He wants to be here when we get through to the McHenry boat.

DOUG. This baby can be mounted directly on the engine. And that's just where it's going to go, on the *McHenry* Jet Engines. (*Wagner has entered* U. L. *during the above.*)

WAGNER. If McHenry gives us the order. (*All ad-lib. hellos to Wagner.*)

DOUG. He'll give it to us. A twenty million dollar order, that's what he's going to give to us. (*John Wagner is the President of the Norse Wagner Company, about sixty-six, silver haired, substantial looking. He is extremely conservative in all his attitudes and convinced that the only way to do anything is the conventional way. He is stiff and without humor.*)

WAGNER. (*Crosses* D. *to* R. *of Doug above round table.*) Marine Operator call back yet?

CHUCK. (*Crosses back to group.*) Any minute, Mr. Wagner.

WAGNER. Handsome job, Doug.

DOUG. (*Handing Wagner the model.*) Come on, John, hold this thing. Just hold it. Doesn't it give you a feeling?

WAGNER. Two years of hard work. Two million dollars. It gives me a feeling. (*Telephone rings.*)

CHUCK. That's it. (*He rushes to answer it. Wagner hands model to Doug who puts it back on table.*) Hello —— Yes, Operator —— (*To others.*) It's the Marine Operator. She's flashing the McHenry boat.

WAGNER. Take it, Doug. (*Doug crosses* R. *below sofa, takes phone from Chuck and sits on* R. *end of sofa. Wagner moves to behind* R. *end of sofa. Underhill crosses to below* C. *of sofa and Chuck crouches on heels* R. *of* R. *arm of sofa.*)

DOUG. Hello, Spencer!—What?—Yes, we're ready.—Hello, Spencer! This is Doug Sayre. I'm at the Metal Founders Convention in Palm Beach. How are you and Myra?

WAGNER. (*Taking phone from Doug.*) Hello out there, Spencer! John Wagner speaking. Having a good cruise? (*Thrusts phone back to Doug.*)

DOUG. (*Into phone.*) Listen, Spencer, why don't you give up playing Moby Dick and come on in and join us? We'll have a big night, go out on the town. How about it? Over.—(*Listens, then to others.*) He says he likes it out there. He caught a fish.

WAGNER. Tell him we're planning a party.

DOUG. Says he'll ask Myra what she wants to do. (*Into phone.*) What did you say? I can't hear you. Over.—(*Listens, then to others.*) Myra says she wants to get off the damn boat!

UNDERHILL. Bless that little woman!

WAGNER. Chuck, get some flowers. Get his wife a present. (*Chuck starts below the sofa for the door.*)

DOUG. (*Into phone.*) That's wonderful, Spencer. You phone me at the Surfside as soon as you dock.—Tomorrow? Oh, yes, yes —— (*Chuck stops on platform by doors on the word tomorrow.*) Six o'clock is perfect. We're looking forward to seeing you. And, Spencer, give my very best to Myra, over. (*He hangs up. All show their relief.*)

UNDERHILL. (*Moves to* C.) Boy, we're in for sure! (*Chuck moves down steps to chair* L. *of round table.*)

WAGNER. How'd he sound, Doug? Did he seem pleased?

DOUG. (*Crosses to desk with phone.*) Well, it was between the devil and the deep blue sea and we won—with his wife's help. (*Wagner smiles. Doug puts phone down, turns and sees Wagner.*) Why, John, you're smiling.

WAGNER. What? Oh—— (*Smile disappears instantly. He crosses below sofa to doors* U. L.) Chuck, I want you at the Management Seminar—starts in ten minutes.

CHUCK. (*Looks at watch.*) Check. (*Sits* L. *of round table, picks up "Wall Street Journal."*)

WAGNER. (*On platform by* U. L. *doors.*) Art, there's a dandy meeting in Parlor B. It's called "Expense Accounts: A Test of Moral Stamina." (*Wagner goes. Underhill registers his rebuke and crosses to below* C. *of sofa. Helen comes up on the terrace from off* R. *She is wearing a blouse and the beach skirt. She still has her beach bag and sunglasses.*)

HELEN. (*Calling from off* R. *as she enters.*) Oh, Doug, I wish you could have been with me.

DOUG. Darling, I'm sorry I ran out on you this morning—but here's your competition. (*He takes her to behind round table to look at the model. Chuck rises, leaving "Wall Street Journal" on table.*)

HELEN. Oh, my! Oh! She's divine.

DOUG. You're sunburned. (*He notices the silence from the other two men.*) Did you have any lunch?

HELEN. Oh, yes. I had plenty to eat. I picked up some boys on the beach. (*Crosses* L.) They gave me some sandwiches. (*She goes out to bedroom* D. L. *to leave beach bag and sunglasses. Chuck moves up steps on to platform by doors* U. L. *Underhill moves* C.)

DOUG. (*A step down to* C.) Boys?

HELEN. (*From bedroom.*) Peanut butter and jelly on whole wheat.

DOUG. (*Laughing.*) You mean *little* boys.

HELEN. (*Coming back from bedroom. Indicates height with her hand.*) Oh, about that big. That age when their ears and their teeth stick out. (*Crosses to sofa, sits* C. *of sofa.*)

UNDERHILL. (*At* C.) Well, Amy won't stand for anyone feeling lonesome.

CHUCK. (*On platform by doors.*) When we get back home, my Marge will invite you over to the Topics Club.

HELEN. Topics Club? (*Helen picks up bottle of gingerale from tray of drink things on sofa table. Doug crosses behind sofa and pours Helen a glass of gingerale.*)

CHUCK. Yes. The girls choose a different topic each week. They sit around and group noodle it—mental hygiene—opera, fall-out.

UNDERHILL. And, Mrs. Sayre, you missed a big afternoon. The

girls are having a Canasta Tournament. And I happen to know that the first prize was a platinum mink stole! Now what do you think of that?

HELEN. I wouldn't have won it anyway.

UNDERHILL. Now—the best helping hand is the one at the end of your own shirtsleeve.

HELEN. I know, Mr. Underhill, but you see I ——

UNDERHILL. You've got to have faith. You got to tell yourself, "I'm going to win that stole. I'm going to win that stole."

HELEN. But I wouldn't have had a chance in the world.

UNDERHILL. With an attitude like that you're licked before you start.

HELEN. No—it's just that I don't know how to play Canasta. (*Underhill looks pained.*)

DOUG. (*Hands her gingerale. Crosses* C. *to between round table and sofa.*) That's Art's number one "Ginger Talk," honey. He gives it to the salesmen every Monday. (*Underhill sits on* L. *arm of sofa.*)

HELEN. Say, Doug, has Dr. Lockwood checked in yet?

DOUG. Find out for me, will you, Chuck?

CHUCK. Right. (*Chuck crosses on* U. S. *platform to the phone on desk.*)

UNDERHILL. That the banquet speaker? What's he coming in today for? The banquet's not till Wednesday.

HELEN. He said he wanted to come down early and get the feel of things.

UNDERHILL. Say, that's a feather in our cap—getting a man like Lockwood down here on such short notice.

DOUG. You can thank my wife for that.

HELEN. Oh, I recognized his name right away. I've read his stuff.

DOUG. The day we decided on Dr. Lockwood I was so damn busy—had to hop a plane for Detroit—so Helen called him for me.

UNDERHILL. The day Amy reads an article about business—that'll be the day!

HELEN. But he writes about so much more than business. Did you see the article that came out last month in the ——

UNDERHILL. Last month? Did you see his column in the *Wall Street Journal* today? You two guys see that? (*Crosses* L., *picks*

up "Wall Street Journal" from round table. Doug sits chair R. *of round table.)* Listen to this. "Real Americans know that the best helping hand is the one at the end of their own shirtsleeve—*(He pauses for this to sink in and laughs.)* Real Americans believe——"
(Marge enters U. L. *doors.)*
MARGE. Oh? Am I interrupting a meeting?
DOUG. No—come on in.
CHUCK. What is it, Marge?
MARGE. *(Crosses to* U. C. *on platform. Indicating program book.)* Mr. Wagner sent me. *(Chuck gets it. He nods.)*
CHUCK. *(On phone.)* Yes, Operator, thank you very much. *(Hangs up.)* Doug, Dr. Lockwood has checked in.
DOUG. *(Rises, crosses up and over* R. *to desk.)* I'm a fine Chairman of the Program Committee—should have met him at the airport. You'd better go get him, Chuck.
CHUCK. *(Starts for* U. L. *doors.)* Right.
UNDERHILL. Hold it, Chuck, I'll go along with you. *(Moves up steps* L. *to door platform.)*
DOUG. *(At desk, looking through papers.)* Tell him we want him to have a drink with us.
CHUCK. O.K. *(Exits* U. L. *door.)*
UNDERHILL. *(On door platform.)* And, Doug, don't you worry about that little lady. She's going to turn out just fine. *(Underhill exits* U. L., *leaves doors open.)*
DOUG. *(Crosses* D. *and sits* D. R. *chair.)* Having fun at the convention, Marge? *(Marge crosses down* C. *to below sofa.)*
MARGE. Oh, nifty—entertainment-wise. Mrs. Sayre, I brought you the Women's Committee schedule. Mr. Wagner wanted you to be sure to have it so you'd know how to put in your time. *(Hands Helen the elaborate engagement book. It has a pencil attached with a ribbon. Helen rises, leaving glass on sofa table.)*
HELEN. —I shouldn't have missed that luncheon.
MARGE. Or the Canasta Tournament. Mrs. Sheldon Parks won the platinum mink stole. Oh, well—even if I had won it I couldn't have worn it around Westminster anyway.
HELEN. Why not?
MARGE. Chuck's bracket. We're not quite ready for mink. Look, everything is listed. *(Pointing to book.)* Time and place, morning, lunch and afternoon. In the evening we get to join the menfolk, see?

HELEN. I see.
MARGE. If you're worrying about that blank space between six and seven—that's cocktail hour. You're supposed to fill that in yourself.
HELEN. Well, that's good.
MARGE. There's the pencil. Write down Neilsons for this evening.
HELEN. (*To Doug.*) But Doug said we were going to have cocktails here alone.
DOUG. (*Leaning forward.*) Well, honey, I ——?
MARGE. Oh, Mr. Sayre, you couldn't have meant that. Just the two of you—and waste an hour?
DOUG. Well, I wasn't planning on wasting it. (*Helen sits on* R. *end of sofa.*)
MARGE. (*To Doug.*) You must have forgotten. (*To Helen.*) The Norse Wagner team always goes to the Neilsons' parties. It's one of our little company traditions. (*She sits* C. *of sofa.*) Oh, I'd better warn you though—Mr. Neilson makes passes.
DOUG. At whom?
MARGE. Everyone. (*To Helen.*) You've got to fight him off enough so that his wife feels secure, but not so much that he feels insecure. (*Crosses up to door platform.*)
HELEN. Marge, do you know what I think? I think that Norse Wagner needs a company psychiatrist.
MARGE. (*On door platform.*) We have one. He's in that little office between FIRST AID and MAINTENANCE. (*Marge leaves* U. L., *leaving doors open. Helen looks at the Program Book.*)
DOUG. That girl's head is set squarely on her hips.
HELEN. (*Leafing through the book.*) I've heard about these goings on but I never believed it. They should have passed out track shoes with this! (*She rises, leaving convention program on sofa. Doug rises.*) Say—about the Neilson cocktail party.—Are there any other "little company traditions" I don't know—(*He takes her in his arms and kisses her. She finishes her speech when they break.*) about?
DOUG. Let's start one right now. (*He picks her up and starts towards the bedroom as Chuck and Lockwood enter.*)
CHUCK. (*Clear his throat.*) Ahem! (*Helen motions frantically for Doug to put her down—he does. Lockwood pauses in doorway as he enjoys the sight, then crosses down* C. *Lockwood is wearing sport jacket and slacks rather than a business suit. Other*

than his "campus" garb there is nothing off beat about his appearance unless one really notices his eyes. They are bright, perceptive and impish.)

DOUG. (*Crosses* C. *to meet Lockwood. Wiping off lipstick.*) Oh, Dr. Lockwood.

LOCKWOOD. How do you do?

DOUG. (*Shaking hands* C.) How do you do? I'm Douglas Sayre.

HELEN. (*Crosses to him.*) I'm his wife, Helen.

DOUG. You spoke to Helen on the telephone. (*They shake hands.*)

HELEN. I'm so glad you agreed to come, Dr. Lockwood.

LOCKWOOD. You were irresistible.

HELEN. If you'd raised any objections I'd have talked you right out of them.

LOCKWOOD. My policy is never argue with a charming feminine voice.

DOUG. How is your room here? They take good care of you?

LOCKWOOD. Ocean view. Orange tree at the door. Full treatment.

DOUG. Good. How about a drink? (*Helen crosses* R. *and up behind sofa table to pour him a drink.*)

LOCKWOOD. (*Crosses* R. *to below* R. *end of sofa.*) From a snowstorm to the tropics in a few hours. I need a drink to help me believe it. Scotch, please.

CHUCK. (*Crosses down steps* L. *to* L. C.) Mighty lucky to find a man who's not afraid to say what he thinks. We're with you. We've read your stuff.

LOCKWOOD. That's most gratifying.

CHUCK. You just make your pitch good and loud. There's a full spell-out of important people here and they're all worried.

LOCKWOOD. What are they worried about?

DOUG. (C.) When business is bad they're worried that it will get worse and when business is good—they're worried that it won't get better. (*Helen crosses* D. R. *with drink for Lockwood.*)

CHUCK. Doug, Kramer machines are waiting for you.

DOUG. (*A step up to between sofa and round table.*) I'll be right over.

CHUCK. I've got to nose over to that seminar. (*Crosses up step* L. *to door platform.*)

LOCKWOOD. Seminar? It sounds like the campus.

CHUCK. (*On platform by doors.*) Round table discussion on "How to give a Junior Executive a Senior Mentality." Psychologist who leads it is a crackerjack. (*Takes brochure out of pocket and reads.*) "Men who handle men will always handle men who can only handle things."

LOCKWOOD. (*Front of sofa.*) I'll have to think that one through. (*Chuck exits* U. L., *leaving doors open.*)

DOUG. (*A step down.*) Will you join us for dinner, Doctor?

LOCKWOOD. (*Sits on* R. *end of sofa.*) I barely had time to get some notes together. I think I'd better stay in and work on my speech.

DOUG. Anything you say. You'll have to excuse me for awhile. I have some business to take care of. (*Crosses up* L. C.) I'll leave you with my wife. She's one of your fans.

LOCKWOOD. Delighted.

DOUG. Be back as soon as I can, darling.

HELEN. Fine. (*Doug exits* U. L., *leaving doors open.*) Well —— (*Picks up her gingerale glass from sofa table. Crosses behind sofa to* C.)

LOCKWOOD. Maybe it's the expensive whiskey that does it ——

HELEN. Does what?

LOCKWOOD. Makes the atmosphere seem so full of warmth and good will.

HELEN. You sound surprised. (*Sits on sofa,* L. *end.*)

LOCKWOOD. I don't know—they invited me here to talk—they must want to hear what I have to say.

HELEN. Of course. They must.

LOCKWOOD. Twenty-five hundred members of the American Metal Founders Association—are you sure?

HELEN. Oh, yes. The Committee decided on you. When Doug told me I said you'd be a very stimulating speaker.

LOCKWOOD. I'm inclined to agree—but how did you know?

HELEN. I read your last article in the *Atlantic Monthly.*

LOCKWOOD. Now you're a corporation wife. Didn't that piece, as they say, hit you where you live?

HELEN. It certainly did—and I've only lived there since I got married.

LOCKWOOD. Where's that again?

HELEN. Westminster, Indiana, the home of Norse Wagner. (*Indicates banner on rail.*)

LOCKWOOD. Oh, yes, a real company town. How long have you been married?

HELEN. Just two weeks.

LOCKWOOD. Oh—tell me, how were the preliminaries?—No —— Did the boss ask you to dinner to see if your small talk was small enough and your deference was deft enough.

HELEN. Not me. I haven't even met Mr. Wagner. He's been in California.

LOCKWOOD. Oh —— Then you don't really have the Westminster seal of approval yet.

HELEN. They don't have mine either. (*Lockwood chuckles.*) Your article sounded exactly like Westminster. Group-work, group-play, group-think. The only thing you left out was group-sex.

LOCKWOOD. I beg your pardon?

HELEN. At parties?

LOCKWOOD. What??

HELEN. All the females stay together at one end of the room and all the males stay together at the other end.

LOCKWOOD. Oh. (*Crosses up* R., *puts glass down on sofa table.*)

HELEN. This is my first convention and I'm afraid I'm not quite integrated yet.

LOCKWOOD. (*Takes off glasses.*) You'll have to get used to it. You might be going to half a dozen a year.

HELEN. *Six conventions a year!* Why?

LOCKWOOD. They used to be held for the engineers and executives to exchange information. Now they've become tax-free festivals. In my opinion, (*Polishes glasses with his kerchief.*) after sex and baseball, conventions are the third best sport. (*Admiring the room.*) They certainly pick their playing fields, don't they? (*Crosses up* C.) I never expected it—that a convention of corporation tycoons would take me to its bosom.

HELEN. Why not? They like what you write.

LOCKWOOD. I didn't realize I was getting such a wide circulation. (*Faces outside, looks at terrace and view.*)

HELEN. Don't they read you in that business paper, the *Wall Street Journal?*

LOCKWOOD. (*Faces inside of room.*) The *Wall Street Journal?* Now you're talking about the other Lockwood. (*Faces outside. A long pause while Helen digests this information. She is stunned.*

She can't believe she's heard him correctly. Lockwood moves L. *on the terrace.*)

HELEN. (*Rises, crosses* L. *to below round table, picks up pencil.*) Dr. Lockwood ——

LOCKWOOD. (*Turns into room.*) Yes?

HELEN. Did you say—the *other* Lockwood?

LOCKWOOD. Thomas G. He's the economist. I'm the professor of Philosophy—*Wall Street Journal's* his bailiwick. (*Turns out of room.*)

HELEN. And your names are the same! (*She crosses up, steps* L., *closes* U. L. *double doors.*)

LOCKWOOD. (*Moves down into room.*) Not exactly. My first name is Jonas. You know the magazines which publish me—I shouldn't have thought they circulated in the corporation board rooms or the barber shops. (*Winds up behind drink tray on sofa table, picks up bottle.*) Say, I haven't had any of this twelve-year-old stuff for a long time. Mind if I have another? (*She gestures with pencil indicating go right ahead and he pours another drink.*)

HELEN. (*Crosses* D. *and sits on sofa.*) Such a coincidence. Two Lockwoods who both write about business!

LOCKWOOD. (*Crosses* C. *to between sofa and round table.*) From opposite directions. Thomas G. is a high-paid Goliath. I'm a low-paid David. I have something of a reputation as a corporation-killer.

HELEN. (*A groan.*) Oh ——

LOCKWOOD. By God, here I am behind the lines—(*Crosses* D. R.) *invited* right into the center of his territory! You know that *signifies* something! (*Over* R.)

HELEN. (*Rises.*) Not what you think!

LOCKWOOD. I've been pondering it since you called me, and I've come up with a theory. The corporation men are fed to the eyebrows with harmony —— They're dying to get stirred up. And by God—if that's what they want, they've sent for the right man!

HELEN. (*A step towards him.*) But I think you might be on the wrong track ——

LOCKWOOD. You've just read the piece I've printed. Wait till you hear the piece I'm going to speak. "Gentlemen," I shall say, "are you men or are you Eunuchs?"

HELEN. Oh, dear —— (*Crosses* L. *to below round table, puts down pencil.*)

LOCKWOOD. (*Inspired, over* R.) "You used to trade eight hours for a salary, now you're trading twenty-four. You used to have an office life and a private life—now you have only a company life. The corporation used to want your sweat—now it wants your souls."

HELEN. That'll bring down the house.

LOCKWOOD. Ridicule—the most effective weapon.

HELEN. (*A step* D. S.) And that's the weapon you're planning to use in your banquet speech?

LOCKWOOD. (*Crosses to* C.) I shall put it in language of the utmost elegance, but my point will be clear. What a man does after six o'clock should be his own affair. Let him sail a boat—look at the stars—chop wood—or even listen to Stravinsky, as long as it's what he chooses to do. Gentlemen, I shall say, if a customer comes around after hours tell him to go climb a tree.

HELEN. That kind of talk can make people awfully nervous.

LOCKWOOD. They wouldn't have invited *me* down here if they wanted a lullaby. (*He finishes drink, puts glass down on end table* L. *of sofa, crosses* L. *and up steps to door platform* U. L.) Splendid whisky, elegant hotel. I think I'd better go and make some notes. I'm being paid a big fat fee. I shall deliver a big fat speech! (*He turns to open the doors but Wagner is entering. He bumps into Wagner. To Wagner.*) I beg your pardon. (*With a wave at Helen.*) See you on the firing line! (*Exits, leaving doors open.*)

HELEN. (*Crosses up to behind round table.*) Yes?—Can I help you?—Oh!—You must be looking for Doug.

WAGNER. I just saw him in the lobby. He'll be right over.

HELEN. I'm his wife, Helen.

WAGNER. How do you do—Helen. (*He crosses down steps* L. *to* L. C.)

HELEN. How do you do —— Would you care for a drink?

WAGNER. Never touch it before five o'clock.

HELEN. (*Looking at travelling clock on pass-through shelf over desk.*) Only two and a half minutes to go.

WAGNER. I hear you've been on the beach already.

HELEN. (*Crosses* R. *and down between sofa and round table.*) Oh, yes! The water's wonderful! I've never had a winter holiday before.

WAGNER. A convention is not a holiday.

HELEN. (*Sits* L. *end of sofa.*) Oh, you're right, Mr-r. ——?

WAGNER. Wagner. John Wagner, of the Norse Wagner Company. (*He points to his convention badge. She slowly rises.*)
HELEN. Of course, I should have realized. I thought you were one of Doug's friends—not that you're not one of Doug's friends—I mean—— (*Goes to him below round table with her hand out.*) I'm so glad to meet you at last—— (*Doug enters* U. L. *doors, crosses* D. L. *steps to between them* D. L. C.)
DOUG. Good—I see you two have met. (*To Wagner.*) What do you think? Isn't my taste impeccable? (*Helen crosses up to behind sofa.*)
WAGNER. Indeed.
DOUG. Sorry to keep you waiting, John. (*Helen glances at clock, pours a small drink.*)
WAGNER. Doug, we've got to get a commitment from McHenry tomorrow at the party. As soon as Dyke-Wilcox sees him here, they'll try to take him over. They've been on his neck night and day.
DOUG. Well, all right but at least he'll be ours for one whole evening. (*Crosses below sofa to desk to look at papers.*)
WAGNER. We mustn't have any slip-ups. Now remember, Doug, we must plan our work and work our plan. (*Helen laughs.*) They're due here late in the afternoon. Right?
DOUG. Right. Chuck'll pick them up at the dock around six. (*Crosses down, sits in armchair* D. R.)
HELEN. (*Behind sofa looking at clock.*) Time!
WAGNER. What's that?
HELEN. (*Bringing him a drink* D. C.) Five o'clock.
WAGNER. (*Consulting pocket watch.*) You're right. (*Takes drink in one gulp and hands her the glass.*) Thank you.
HELEN. You're welcome. We'll have the cocktails here. (*Helen crosses* U. *to back of sofa, puts his glass back on drink tray.*)
WAGNER. And then after the dinner dance we can all go out on the town. Chuck suggested the Flamingo Club.
HELEN. I'll telephone. I'll make the reservation. (*She starts for the desk.*)
DOUG. Helen's been a great help. She called Lockwood for me. (*Helen stops in her tracks, then proceeds to desk for pad and pencil.*)
HELEN. (*To* R. *corner of sofa.*) Now that's the Flamingo Club?
WAGNER. Yes. (*Crosses up* C. *to below platform.*)

HELEN. (*Crosses to behind* C. *of sofa.*) And that's in Palm Beach?
WAGNER. Yes.
HELEN. (*Crosses to Wagner up* C.) In Palm Beach, not in Miami Beach?
WAGNER. Yes, in Palm Beach. We want a table on the dance floor but not too near the band.
HELEN. Not too near the band. Exactly how near?
DOUG. For God's sake, Helen.—Anywhere where we can hear ourselves talk.
HELEN. Where we can hear ourselves talk. (*Sits in chair* R. *of round table and writes this down.*)
WAGNER. (*Steps* D. *to between sofa and round table, puts on glasses.*) Spencer drinks Scotch. King's Ransom.
HELEN. If they don't have it here in the hotel, I'll search the town.
WAGNER. (*Takes pocket bar guide from his pocket.*) Myra McHenry's favorite drink is an Orleans Fizz. (*He leafs through a pocket bar guide.*)
HELEN. (*Writing.*) Orleans Fizz.
WAGNER. (*Reading.*) Dry gin, lemon juice, lime juice, egg white, orange flower water, superfine sugar, charged water, cracked ice, heavy cream, got that?
HELEN. (*Writing frantically.*) No.
WAGNER. Place in shaker six ounces of dry gin, juice of lemon and lime ——
HELEN. (*Writing madly.*) Juice of lemon and lime ——
WAGNER. White of two eggs, two tablespoons heavy cream ——
HELEN. Two tablespoons heavy cream ——
WAGNER. One tablespoon superfine sugar, one teaspoon orange flower water, one cup cracked ice. In New Orleans, the shaker is passed down a line of eight strong men, each of whom shakes until he is tired.
HELEN. (*Reads what she has written.*) One tablespoon superfine sugar, one teaspoon orange flower water, one cup cracked ice, eight strong men —— (*She looks up at Wagner and laughs. Wagner hands her the book and a crushing look. She gets up and crosses* L.) If you'll excuse me I'll be getting ready for the Neilsons. (*Exits* D. L. *to bedroom and closes the door.*)
WAGNER. (*Still* C.) Doug, I'm worried.

DOUG. What about?
WAGNER. Does Helen realize how important this party is to the Norse Wagner Company?
DOUG. (*Rises.*) Of course, she does.
WAGNER. (*Crosses to above* L. *corner of sofa.*) Doug, every other wife at this convention was at a luncheon today except the wife of my General Manager.
DOUG. (*Sits on* R. *end of sofa.*) Oh, well, Helen didn't understand about the luncheon ——
WAGNER. Well, it may hurt you to hear this, Doug, but I think she's—socially retarded!
DOUG. Now wait a minute, John—this sort of thing is all new to Helen.
WAGNER. Then you must point out to her the value of cultivating the right people.
DOUG. I'm the one that's on salary.
WAGNER. Is it taking too much for granted to think Norse Wagner means as much to you as it does to me?
DOUG. It's the only company I've ever worked for—that ought to prove how much it means to me ——
WAGNER. (*Moves around* L. *corner of sofa to* C.) The company's helped you on to a brilliant career. We have a stake in you, and it has to be protected. When you chose a wife you should have been guided by what was good for us —— (*Crosses up* C.)
DOUG. I had other guide posts, John ——
WAGNER. (*Crosses down* C. *to between sofa and round table.*) If only you'd come to us before you went into this marriage—our psychiatrist could have spotted trouble ahead.
DOUG. You mean I should have had Helen screened by Personnel?
WAGNER. Personnel assured me that Marge would help Chuck go right up the ladder—they could tell just by showing her some ink blots.
DOUG. —Listen, John, Helen is my personal life, not my business life.
WAGNER. (*Sits on* L. *end of sofa.*) Doug, you can't turn business on and off like a faucet. I remember saying those very words to Clara. I came home one evening and there she was watering the garden. "Get dressed," I told her, "we're taking some customers out to dinner." She set up a fuss. Remember how fond she was of

that garden? I walked over and turned off the hose. "Clara," I said, "you can't turn business on and off like a faucet." (*He pauses.*) I had a little trouble with Clara, bless her heart. But now that she's gone, I miss her. (*His tone changes from reminiscence to the immediately practical. He rises.*) You're still a bridegroom, Doug. I'm making allowances (*Crosses* U. C., *then to door platform.*) for that. But as I've told all the married couples in our company—love is not looking into another's eyes—it's looking in the same direction. (*He exits* U. L., *leaving doors open.*)

DOUG. (*Rises, crosses to below round table.*) Helen! (*Helen comes out of the bedroom wearing a negligee, comes to him below round table.*)

HELEN. I know I didn't win a blue ribbon from the boss, did I, Doug?

DOUG. Oh, John's getting on, he's getting cranky—he wants everything his own way.

HELEN. I certainly don't mind giving a party for the McHenrys ——

DOUG. (*Takes her to sofa.*) Well, it's not that —— Come over here —— Damn it—maybe it's just as well things have worked out the way they have. The sooner I wrap up this McHenry deal, the sooner we can go off by ourselves. (*Both sit on sofa, Doug* L., *Helen* R.) Have a real honeymoon, Nassau, Montego Bay.—But in the meantime I'm afraid there's a full program for *all* the wives.

HELEN. (*Picking up convention program from sofa.*) Oh, I see. I have to put on a hat and gloves and stockings and go to a swamp.

DOUG. No more peanut butter sandwiches for lunch.

HELEN. Chicken patties and wrinkled peas. (*She flops to her* R. *on sofa.*)

DOUG. (*Pulls her up to sitting position.*) And if all the other wives are playing cards—if they're playing hopscotch—well—for the next three days, would you get with the games?

HELEN. I will, Doug, I promise.

DOUG. (*Rises, crosses up around* L. *end of sofa to desk.*) Now listen, I'm not trying to change you—I don't want you any different—I'm just asking that you not operate out in left field. Just do what the other wives do. (*At desk, picks up papers.*)

HELEN. You mean just sort of pretend on the surface, and stay myself underneath?

DOUG. Sure, that's the idea.

HELEN. Like a jar labeled maple syrup—but it's really motor oil?
DOUG. What are you talking about? (*Telephone rings—Doug answers.*) Hello? Yes?—Will you try that call again, please, operator? (*Sits at desk.*)
HELEN. (*Rises and crosses around* R. *end of sofa to behind it.*) There's a Federal Law. If the jar says maple syrup, it's got to be maple syrup. (*She puts convention book on sofa table.*)
DOUG. (*On phone.*) Norse Wagner Company, Westminster, Indiana. Randolph 1-1400.
HELEN. (*Back of* L. *end of sofa.*) Look, Doug, I know that there are some people who can look and act one way and feel another but I'm just not one of them. If I'm forced to pretend the way I feel I just get all unfocused.
DOUG. Unfocused?
HELEN. (*Trying to get through to him.*) Unstuck, unhinged, unbalanced ——
DOUG. Darling, all I'm asking is do what the other wives are doing —— (*On phone.*) Mr. Earl Kreiger. K-r-e-i-g-e-r.
HELEN. (*Crosses around* L. *end of sofa to below it.*) Oh, Doug, do you think people can make honest mistakes?
DOUG. (*Rise.*) They do it every day.
HELEN. (*Crosses to* R. *end of sofa and kneels on it.*) And nothing terrible happens?
DOUG. (*On phone.*) Douglas Sayre, 3A.
HELEN. Suppose a man sent his wife to a kennel ——
DOUG. A kennel?
HELEN. Suppose a man sent his wife to a kennel to get a poodle ——
DOUG. (*On phone.*) No, operator, this is suite 3A.
HELEN. And she came back with a Kerry Blue.
DOUG. (*To Helen, taking phone to* R. *end of sofa.*) Would you mind repeating that?
HELEN. The point is that poodles and Kerry Blues do look a lot alike. The wife made a mistake. What would her husband think of her?
DOUG. He'd think she was a damn idiot. (*On phone.*) What's that, operator? He's in the factory? Get him out there; they have phones in the factory.
HELEN. Suppose somebody ordered five hundred valves and the corporation sent them five hundred gears ——

DOUG. Helen ——
HELEN. Yes?
DOUG. Listen, honey, I don't have time to get into a discussion. I'm absolutely snowed. This McHenry deal is driving me crazy. If Norse Wagner doesn't put this deal through we're going to be in real trouble. I don't know what's going to happen. You've got to stand by me now. I need your help ——
HELEN. Oh, Doug, I *want* to help you.
DOUG. Then don't give John Wagner any excuse to —— (*On phone.*) Hello, Earl.
HELEN. Excuse to *what?*
DOUG. (*Crosses to desk with phone. On phone.*) I just want to make sure about the McHenry estimates. Okay, that's the package then. God, I don't know, Earl. Dyke Wilcox is breathing down his neck. Thanks a lot, boy, I'll need it. (*Hangs up.*) Looks like everything's all set. Tomorrow, we lock it up. (*He crosses behind sofa to* C. *Sees her expression.*) Say, what's the matter with you? (*Crosses down to her, below sofa.*)
HELEN. I feel as though the whistle blew and everyone went out to lunch. Doug, I've done something terrible —— (*Rises.*)
DOUG. (*Embraces her.*) Don't be silly.
HELEN. But you don't know.
DOUG. It'll all be smoothed over. Nobody's going to mind ——
HELEN. Nobody's going to mind!
DOUG. People make mistakes.
HELEN. But this is such a whopper of a mistake!
DOUG. Sure, John is miffed, but he'll get over it.
HELEN. You're talking about that fool luncheon! (*She breaks the embrace.*)
DOUG. Helen, honey, listen. Corporation people are very friendly people—if we don't join in their fun, it looks as though we're being critical ——
HELEN. And they get mad at a little criticism?
DOUG. You know how it is.
HELEN. And they get tremendously mad at a big criticism? (*He embraces her again.*)
DOUG. Stop worrying. Nothing you've done looks that big. (*Takes a long look at her, holds her off.*) What is this wonderful thing you're wearing?
HELEN. The shops call it a trousseau item.

DOUG. Nice.

HELEN. It's not supposed to be nice. It's supposed to inflame your senses.

DOUG. That what does it? (*Takes her in his arms. They kiss. Telephone rings. He thrusts her aside and crosses to desk to answer it.*) Hello.—Yes, he's checked in.—I'm sure it can be arranged. Where are you now? We'd better get together on that. I'll be right over. (*Hangs up.*) Honey, I've got to run —— (*Crosses behind sofa towards doors* U. L.)

HELEN. Doug, I've got to talk to you ——

DOUG. Honey, there's an A.P. reporter waiting for me in the lobby—(*Helen crosses up to* C.) wants to set up a press conference for Dr. Lockwood ——

HELEN. (*Crosses to below railing. Doug is on platform by doors.*) A press conference?

DOUG. Press guys from all over the country. Lockwood's a big deal ——

HELEN. *When?*

DOUG. I don't know, honey. I just have to get it organized and ——

HELEN. But, Doug—wait—listen ——

DOUG. (*At door.*) Honey, I'll be right back. (*He exits* U. L., *leaving doors open. Dejected and annoyed, she slams the railing, then slams the turbojet, realizes what she has done and hastily is sorry and with her two hands soothes the machine as though it were a child. After an instant Helen goes up to the door platform, closes and locks the doors then hurries to the phone.*)

HELEN. (*On phone.*) Operator, I'd like to speak to long distance, please. . . . Long distance? This is Helen Sayre in suite 3A. I'd like to place a call to Dr. Thomas G. Lockwood, in the office of the *Wall Street Journal*, in New York City. . . . I don't know the number —— Of course, I'm registered in this room, so is everybody else —— That's all right, operator, I'll speak to his secretary. (*Crosses to corner of sofa, sits on* R. *arm.*) Could you tell me when I can reach Dr. Lockwood? He's out of town! Oh, well, would you have him call me here in Palm Beach the moment you hear from him tomorrow? I'm Mrs. Douglas Sayre. My telephone number is Seaside 7-7000. And tell him it's an emergency. (*Just as Helen is completing the telephone call to Dr. Lockwood's office there is a noise at the door as someone tries to get in. Then*

Marge knocks on door. Helen, to door.) Coming! *(On phone.)* No, that's something else. Thank you. *(Hangs up. Rushes behind sofa to unlock the door. Marge enters carrying a dress box.)*

MARGE. *(Shocked—examines doors—leaves them open.)* Mrs. Sayre—your door was locked!

HELEN. *(Crosses to below* L. *end of sofa.)* I know. I locked it.

MARGE. *(On door platform. At rail.)* But at these get-togethers, everybody lets everybody just barge in and out. You know, the way you do in your own house—family-wise.

HELEN. You mean we're just one big happy family —— *(Arms in expansive gesture.)*

MARGE. That's right. *(Helen claps her hands over her head. Marge crosses around* U. S. *end of railing to* R. *of round table.)* Mrs. Sayre, I brought you your uniform to see if it fits. *(Marge puts box on chair* R. *of round table.)*

HELEN. *(Sits on sofa.)* What did you say?

MARGE. Your uniform for the Sobering Up Room.

HELEN. What is the Sobering Up Room?

MARGE. Didn't Mr. Sayre tell you about it? We expect it to be the absolute hit of the convention. Let the others take care of the drinking and Norse Wagner will take care of the hangovers.

HELEN. Like Bellevue!

MARGE. Yes! Instead of a Hospitality Room, with a bar, why not have a Sobering Up Room? It just came to Chuck one morning in the office. Mr. Wagner thinks it's brilliant, novelty-wise. You and I are on duty tomorrow morning at 7:30 A.M. *(Crosses to front of table, puts box and pocketbook on round table, starts to open box.)*

HELEN. On duty? Taking care of drunks?

MARGE. Well—they're drunks at night. In the morning, they're invalids.

HELEN. I don't know, Marge ——

MARGE. Oh, Mrs. Sayre, all we have to do is serve clam juice and black coffee.

HELEN. I haven't had much experience at that.

MARGE. *(Crosses to corner of sofa to Helen.)* Oh, please! Mrs. Sayre, it's for the customers!

HELEN. You mean if we don't get them when they're high—we'll get them when they're hung! *(Marge crosses to the box and is opening it as Doug enters* U. L.*)*

DOUG. (*Crosses down steps* L.) Hi, Marge ——
HELEN. (*Crosses to* L. *to Doug. Urgently.*) Where's the press conference—the press conference for Dr. Lockwood?
DOUG. It's all off. He says he doesn't want to shoot his bolt to the newspapers. He wants to surprise everybody ——
HELEN. Oh?
DOUG. By the way, I asked him to our party tomorrow ——
MARGE. To our cocktail party? For the McHenrys?
HELEN. Why?
DOUG. Thought he'd add a little extra zip ——
HELEN. Oh, Doug—I don't think that's the kind of zip we need at all. Oh—*must* we have Dr. Lockwood?
DOUG. (*Slightly irritated.*) What's the matter, Helen? Sunday you were crazy about him. (*Exits* D. L. *to bedroom.*)
HELEN. Well—today's Monday —— (*Marge takes the uniform out of the box.*)
MARGE. I brought you the smallest size. Now you try it on —— (*She gets the uniform out. It is similar to a nurse's uniform, white with the letters N-W across the chest and SOBERING UP ROOM across the back. Helen has taken off her negligee and throws it over back of chair* R. *of round table then stands below Marge, facing front, below round table as she puts uniform on.*) Tonight after the kick-off dinner there're going to be a lot of parties so business is bound to be rushing tomorrow. (*She puts a white nurse's cap on Helen's head and stands back to take a look.*) There now, let me see. (*Turns Helen around so we see the words "SOBERING UP ROOM" on the back for the first time. As she looks at Helen.*) Why, you look just *perfect*; magnifique! (*She gathers up her things and starts to go.*) Now remember, tomorrow morning—Main Building. (*Stops on double door landing at rail.*) Suite four hundred, fourth floor. Seven-thirty sharp.
HELEN. Do we have to be there that early?
MARGE. Mrs. Sayre, this is a *convention*. Don't expect to be in bed much, sleep-wise. (*Marge exits* U. L. *doors, leaves them open.*)
DOUG. (*Calling from bedroom.*) Helen! (*Helen moves* C., *preening herself.*)
HELEN. Yes, dear? (*He enters* D. L., *crosses below sofa to desk without seeing Helen.*)
DOUG. Honey, did you see a black zipper envelope anywhere around with my initials on it?

HELEN. No, I didn't. (*He doesn't notice what she is wearing, but is absorbed in looking for the envelope. She feels slighted he has not noticed her.*)

DOUG. Damn it, I'm sure I packed it. (*At desk, looking in drawer.*)

HELEN. (*Crosses to behind* L. *end sofa.*) Are you sure about the Sobering Up Room?

DOUG. (*Looking through desk.*) Oh, yes, that's just a little gimmick Chuck dreamed up. You know how it is.

HELEN. No, Doug, I don't really think I do know how it is.

DOUG. (*Crosses* D. L., *gets his suitcase, takes it to chair* L. *of round table.*) Good public relations idea. Something a little different.

HELEN. Do you really want me to do it? (*Finds zipper envelope on floor behind sofa.*)

DOUG. (*Rummaging in suitcase.*) Why not ride along with it, honey—if all the other wives are doing it ——

HELEN. —Is this it? (*Hands him envelope across round table.*)

DOUG. Oh, yeah, thanks —— (*Sees uniform.*) What the hell is that? (*She preens herself, smilingly, crosses* R. C. *below sofa and turns.*)

HELEN. I've won my varsity letter. I'm on the team! (*She salutes him.*)

FAST CURTAIN

END OF ACT I

ACT II

SCENE 1

Early the next morning.
When the curtain goes up, the stage is empty and the doors are closed. The up L. *door opens and Helen enters. She is dressed in the Sobering Up Room uniform but it is no longer in its pristine condition of the day before. There is a large brown coffee stain down the front. The nurse's cap is askew upon her disheveled hair. A handkerchief is wrapped like a bandage around her right hand. She closes the door then staggers down the steps and across the room to the round table which has been set for breakfast for two. She pours herself a cup of coffee with trembling hands and takes a gulp. Then she staggers to above the* L. *end of the sofa and leans on it for support.*

HELEN. (*At* L. *corner of sofa.*) Doug! Doug! I'm back!
DOUG'S VOICE. (*From the bedroom.*) Be out in a minute, darling. (*Helen staggers a little, regains her balance, puts her hand to her head. Doug enters from the bedroom* D. L. *He is in his shirtsleeves and is tying his tie. He leaves the door partially open.*)
DOUG. Well, how'd you do, honey? (*To mirror on left wall over console table, adjusting his tie.*)
HELEN. (*Drawing herself up proudly.*) How did Mickey Mantle do for the Yankees? (*He turns to her.*)
DOUG. (*Gets his first good look at her.*) My God, you look like you slid into home plate. (*Crosses to below round table.*)
HELEN. But I didn't drop the ball. (*Puts cup on end table, crosses to him below round table.*) You wait—I bet they'll put a bronze bust of me in the Norse Wagner lobby.
DOUG. (*Sees bandage, takes her right hand.*) Whose jaw did you connect with?
HELEN. I made friend after friend. And one particular friend.
DOUG. (*Looking at the hand.*) What is that?—Come on over here. (*Crosses to sofa—he sits on* R. *end.*)

HELEN. The coffee urn got tipped over. That little man felt terrible about it. (*Sits on* C. *of sofa.*)
DOUG. Who was that? (*He takes handkerchief off her hand and she puts it in pocket of her uniform.*)
HELEN. A glorious little man. Your customer!
DOUG. Sounds like one of our customers! (*Rises, crosses to round table for butter dish and knife.*)
HELEN. He buys lots of gadgets from Norse Wagner and he's going to buy millions more—'cause he wants you to make lots of money ——
DOUG. (*Crosses to sofa, sits on* L. *end.*) That *doesn't* sound like one of our customers. (*Butters her* R. *hand.*)
HELEN. You're buttering me up —— He said he was going to give you all of his business.
DOUG. (*Curious.*) Damn generous of him.
HELEN. Of course he was just a little bit too playful ——
DOUG. (*Amused.*) *How* playful?
HELEN. You know. The way men are in canoes.
DOUG. Or conventions. I should have given you some defense gambits.
HELEN. That's enough, I'm dieting. (*Helen blows on her burned hand.*)
DOUG. (*Rises, crosses to round table with butter plate and knife.*) And you're tight. Nine o'clock in the morning and you've been drinking! (*Puts plate and knife on table.*)
HELEN. Eight o'clock in the morning and I was drinking!
DOUG. (*Annoyed. Front of table, picks up napkin and wipes his hands.*) Sobering Up Room! I thought the whole idea was not to have any liquor over there.
HELEN. (*Rises.*) That was just the trouble. You see this little man had a terrible hangover—and clam juice didn't help at all. (*Crosses to him below round table.*) He said he was the hair of the dog that bit you type. And the dog was Bourbon. (*Doug gives her glass of fruit juice from table.*)
DOUG. (*Pours his coffee.*) All you had to do was tell him you didn't have any Bourbon ——
HELEN. I came up here and got a couple of bottles of ours. Then he *insisted* that I have a drink with him. (*Drinks juice.*)
DOUG. Honey, you can get drunk on buttermilk—you didn't have to do that.

HELEN. Darling, aren't you forgetting somethin'? H
customer.
DOUG. And he got drunk and spilled coffee all over yo
up his coffee.)
HELEN. (*Crosses to below sofa.*) No, he didn't spill
did. He bumped into her while he was chasing me around the room.
(*Sits* L. *end of sofa.*)
DOUG. *Chasing you?* (*Coffee cup down on round table. Crosses* C. *to her.*)
HELEN. Just high animal spirits. He said I looked like a sugar bunny, and he wanted to eat me all up. (*As Doug gives her a disgusted look she gestures with juice glass still in her hand.*) Little man! Big appetite! Weee —— (*A loud knock at the door.*)
DOUG. Come in. (*He crosses to* D. L. *door and closes it. Chuck enters. He wears an expression of aggrieved self-control. He leaves the doors open.*)
CHUCK. (*Crosses down* L. *steps to* C.) Here's a tube of tannic acid salve, Mrs. Sayre. The pharmacist recommended it for your burn. (*Puts it on end table* L. *of sofa.*)
HELEN. Thank you, Chuck. (*She leans over tube of salve to get a closer look and puts juice glass on end table.*)
CHUCK. Large family size. (*Crosses* L. *towards steps.*)
DOUG. (*Stops him. To Chuck.*) Say, Chuck, what went on over there? I thought your whole gimmick was a Sobering Up Room.
CHUCK. (*Bitterly—below round table.*) So did I, Doug. Apparently Mrs. Sayre decided otherwise.
HELEN. You mean the Bourbon? You mean I shouldn't have ——
CHUCK. (*To Doug who is above* D. L. *chair.*) By bringing whiskey in there, Mrs. Sayre violated the very spirit of the Sobering Up Room.
HELEN. I'm sorry, Chuck. (*Rises, a step to* C.)
CHUCK. The idea was my baby, so I have a special personal kind of feeling about it, that's all.
HELEN. If only that little man hadn't insisted on having a drink.
DOUG. Who was that guy, Chuck?
CHUCK. I don't know, Doug. Some bald, chubby, short guy ——
HELEN. But isn't the customer always right? Even a short customer?
CHUCK. He *isn't* a customer, Mrs. Sayre.
HELEN. What?

CHUCK. He was just some drunk who wandered in off the street.

HELEN. But he said he buys things from Norse Wagner. Left-handed pipe elbows —— (*Chuck looks imploringly at Doug, who is laughing silently.*)

DOUG. There is no such thing as a left-handed pipe elbow.

CHUCK. He isn't even attending the convention, Mrs. Sayre. You should have realized that when you saw that he wasn't wearing a badge.

HELEN. And everyone at a convention wears a badge? (*Crosses to him.*)

CHUCK. Unless they're some kind of damn introvert.

HELEN. But he said —— (*She makes a despondent gesture, crosses* R. *to below sofa—faces up stage.*) It's enough to make me lose my faith in people.

CHUCK. (*Crosses to her.*) Mrs. Sayre, some people are all right, and some people are not all right. And the ones who are all right wear badges. (*Chuck starts to leave, gets as far as double door platform.*)

DOUG. (*A step up to below steps* L.) Uh—Chuck, no point in upsetting John about all this. No need to mention it to him at all. (*Helen picks up her coffee cup from end table and takes a drink facing up stage.*)

CHUCK. (*At rail.*) Mr. Wagner knows all about it, Doug. He walked into the Sobering Up Room a few minutes ago.

HELEN. (*Turns front.*) Don't tell me Mr. Wagner needed sobering up!

CHUCK. He saw the place was a shambles, Mrs. Sayre. What could I do, Doug? I *had* to explain ——

HELEN. (*Faces Chuck upstage.*) Tattletale. (*Drinks coffee.*)

CHUCK. He was certainly teed off about the whiskey bottles. I didn't want him to think that I had anything to do with that.

DOUG. Did you at least make it clear to him that Helen had a problem?

CHUCK. He asked me if Mrs. Sayre had a drinking problem —— (*She sinks down on* L. *end of sofa.*)

DOUG. Oh, God!

CHUCK. By the way, Mrs. Sayre, you won't have to be on duty tomorrow. Marge is getting one of the other wives to help.

HELEN. *Fired!* (*Tosses her nurse cap up in the air. It lands upstage.*)

CHUCK. We thought we'd just—pass the opportunity around. (*Exits* U. L., *closing doors behind him. Doug looks at Helen. Suddenly he grins broadly. Then he bursts into laughter. She drinks coffee, watching him over the cup rim.*)

DOUG. Darling, come over here. I'm going to tell you the facts of life. (*Sits* L. *of round table.*)

HELEN. (*Despondent.*) My mother told me. (*Rises, crosses to chair* R. *of round table and sits.*)

DOUG. But I'm going to explain the facts of life with a corporation executive.—You see the trouble with you is that you're too—impulsive. What you've got to remember is that basically ——

HELEN. We're all animals under a thin veneer ——

DOUG. Basically we're all confused by new situations —— (*Helen rises and staggers to end table to get her coffee cup.*) Damn it, are you going to listen to me?

HELEN. (*Grabs her cup from end table and sits in chair again.*) I'm listening.

DOUG. The way business is set up today, anything we do reflects on our company.

HELEN. And if a girl makes a mistake, other companies will talk? (*She pours herself more coffee.*)

DOUG. (*Eating fruit cup.*) We're in business for one purpose only—to make profits and to keep the stockholders happy.

HELEN. Doug—where does a stock *really* come from?

DOUG. Well—anybody can buy stocks—that is, put his money in a company ——

HELEN. And a little seed begins to grow!

DOUG. Oh, the hell with it. (*He slams down his fruit cocktail and proceeds to help himself to the pancakes. She butters her toast.*) If only you understood how to handle corporation people. Before I was made General Manager I went to a school for executives. They gave a very sharp course in human relations.

HELEN. Can you learn that? I mean like Latin verbs? (*Butters her toast.*)

DOUG. No, you learn it by role-playing ——

HELEN. Role playing?

DOUG. Say I have a lousy salesman on my team—I want to get him to do better work. Now there's a wrong way and a right way to handle him.

HELEN. There is?

DOUG. Look, I'll show you. (*He pulls his chair down stage* L. C., *below round table, for her to sit in. He moves to* C.) Now I'm the boss and you're a salesman and I've just asked you to come into my office.

HELEN. All right. What do I do? (*Rises, crosses down and sits in chair he has placed for her. Takes a piece of toast with her.*)

DOUG. (*Still* C.) Act out the part. Remember you're doing a bad job, you're not making enough money, you're *miserable.* (*Helen assumes a woebegone expression and a posture of utter dejection.*) Don't overdo it. (*Doug paces the room, takes on voice and manner of a tough, slave-driving boss. Whirling on Helen, his finger in her face.*) Now look here, Charlie, you jerk. I've been looking over your reports. They're all screwed up. They're no damn good. They stink. (*Crosses a bit to* C.)

HELEN. (*Meekly.*) I know.

DOUG. (*Turns back to her. Normal voice.*) You're not supposed to say, "I know." You're supposed to get mad.

HELEN. Why?

DOUG. Why? Look what I've just said to you. (*Leans to her.*)

HELEN. But it's all true.

DOUG. Truth has nothing to do with it. Don't you hate me? Don't you feel I'm making a direct attack on your manhood?

HELEN. (*Considering for an instant.*) No.

DOUG. Well, I am, for God's sake. (*Crosses up, picks up small piece of pancake, moves to between round table and end table. Boss's voice.*) Now listen here, Charlie, when I hire a guy I expect him to get in there and pitch—hit that line! Fill that quota! You call yourself a salesman? I expect you to sell—sell—sell! Sell iceboxes to Eskimos.

HELEN. Eskimos don't need iceboxes.

DOUG. (*Impatiently.*) That's the point.

HELEN. (*Figuring it out. Shoves her chair upstage a foot or so.*) If a man can sell a person a thing a person has no use for—you *like* that?

DOUG. It proves he's a *salesman* ——

HELEN. It proves he's a *crook!*

DOUG. That's just an expression. (*Boss's voice. A step down to her.*) Now listen here, Charlie. You're the lousiest salesman in my outfit. If you don't get off your lazy bottom and get out there and fill your quota, I'm going to throw you right out on your—ear.

That's from the horse's mouth, Charlie—I'm giving it to you straight! (*Crosses* R. *below sofa.*)
HELEN. Okay, boss. Thank you very much.
DOUG. (*Turning back. Confounded.*) What're you thanking me for?
HELEN. For giving it to me straight. You didn't beat around the bush, you told me exactly where I stand. I appreciate that, boss.
DOUG. Oh, God! (*Sits* L. *end of sofa in disgust.*)
HELEN. (*Rises, crosses up* C. *to above* L. *corner of sofa.*) So I'm going to get off my lazy bottom and fill my quota two times over.
DOUG. You mean I've *motivated* you to do better work?
HELEN. The best motivation there is, boss. I don't want to be fired. (*Doug stares at her.*) What's the matter, Doug? (*Crosses down to* C.)
DOUG. (*Clipping off every word.*) You're-not-supposed-to-feel-motivated.
HELEN. I'm not?
DOUG. No.
HELEN. (*Catching on.*) Oh! You were showing me the wrong way to handle a salesman. (*Consoling him.*) Let's play it all over again and this time you show me the right way.
DOUG. No. I'm not in the mood. (*Still seated. Turns from her.*)
HELEN. It's fun.
DOUG. It's not meant to be fun. It's meant to give you insight.
HELEN. Come on, Doug —— (*Hops into sofa on her knees, to his* L. *Kisses back of his neck, pretends to bite back of his neck.*)
DOUG. Okay. Okay. Now really try this time. Throw yourself into the part. You're a salesman *in trouble.* You can't *sell.* I'm your boss. (*She rises, crosses to* L. C.) I'm a nice understanding guy—but don't let me get—(*He rises.*) through to you too quickly. Don't make it too easy for me —— (*He becomes the warm, tender, psychiatrically oriented good boss. It is obvious that he enjoys it.*) Damn—(*Sits on end table* L. *of sofa.*) nice of you to stop in and talk to me, Charlie, old boy. I know how busy you are. Awful sweet of you to come in here and say hello. After all, there's not a reason in the world why you should come in here ——
HELEN. You just *told* me to come in here, boss. (*An annoyed glance from Doug.*)
DOUG. (*Rises.*) Sit down, Charlie. (*She crosses to chair below*

round table.) Charlie, why don't you try this nice overstuffed chair over here? (*He crosses to armchair* D. R.)

HELEN. Oh—this one's all right. (*Patting back of* L. C. *chair.*)

DOUG. (*Over* R.) Oh, come on now. Try this nice big comfortable chair. (*Pounds seat of chair.*) You'll relax better. (*Helen crosses* R. *in awkward, mannish way, sits in* D. R. *armchair.*) There—cushions the tired bones, eh, boy? Now you just give yourself a chance to unwind. How about a cigarette? (*Helen takes an imaginary one from him. Doug lights it with an imaginary match.*) Comfortable, fella? (*Helen shrugs.*) I bet you've had a busy day, Charlie. I know I have. (*He sits on* R. *end of sofa, laughs, crosses his legs. Helen echoes laugh, crosses her legs.*) Well, now, Charlie, I've been looking over these reports of yours. Actually they're not too bad.

HELEN. They're terrible.

DOUG. I wouldn't say that, Charlie.

HELEN. I'm a lousy salesman.

DOUG. Why do you think so, Charlie? I don't think so. (*Leans forward to her.*)

HELEN. Then you must be awfully dumb at arithmetic.

DOUG. Now, Helen, cut it out or we're not going to play. (*He gives her an annoyed glance.*)

HELEN. Well, you told me not to make it easy for you.

DOUG. (*Leaning back.*) Okay, okay. Hell, I know what you're up against, Charlie. (*Rises, crosses a step to* C.) I come home with a briefcase full of work and what happens—I have to go dancing at the Country Club.

HELEN. I don't belong to a Country Club, boss. (*Taps cigarette ashes off the imaginary cigarette.*)

DOUG. Or there's the kids, chasing around the house like wild Indians.

HELEN. I don't have any kids, boss.

DOUG. (*Crosses to her, leans over to her.*) Look, Charlie, my wife is no angel. Buy her this, buy her that, take her here—take her there—my wife gives me a hard time. How's your wife, Charlie?

HELEN. She's fine. (*Doug gives her an exasperated glance and straightens up.*)

DOUG. (*Front of sofa,* R. *end.*) Is it somebody in the office, Char-

lie? Hell, the old man drives me crazy sometimes. Who's rubbing you the wrong way, Charlie?

HELEN. Nobody, boss. The boys in the office are just fine.

DOUG. (*Sits* R. *corner of sofa, leans to her.*) Charlie, do you feel the way I do sometimes? You know, a fella gets restless—sees a pretty face—first thing you know he's *involved!* Got a little something going on the side, Charlie?

HELEN. Nope!

DOUG. (*Exploding violently. Rising, crosses away from her below sofa.*) Then will you tell me, you bloody idiot, why the hell you turn in such stinking reports?

HELEN. I told you, boss.

DOUG. *Told me what?*

HELEN. I'm a lousy salesman! (*He flops on* R. *end of sofa, groans. Timidly she rises, crosses above* R. *corner of sofa, touches his arm with index finger.*) I got insight that time.

DOUG. (*In sofa. Icy.*) Just *what* insight did you get?

HELEN. The boss has got a lot of problems ——

DOUG. (*Raising his voice.*) The *salesman* is the one with the problems. The boss was just sharing his troubles with him—that's the whole technique —— (*Crosses* L., *gets his coffee cup from round table.*)

HELEN. It doesn't work, does it?

DOUG. It worked in Management School. It worked in the office. It works on everyone else but you.

HELEN. Oh, come on now, Doug, you don't take this role-playing seriously, do you?

DOUG. All right—I admit it's a lot of phoney tripe, but it gets things done. Maybe you think it's an odd way to—maybe you think everything around here is rather odd.

HELEN. (*Now has sobered up. Steps to below* R. *end sofa.*) I don't care about everything. I just care about you.

DOUG. Maybe you think John is pompous—and he is pompous. (*Crosses* R. *to below sofa.*) He brought me into the company, he's given me great opportunities—I owe him a lot. (*Sits* C. *of sofa with coffee.*)

HELEN. Of course, darling, but do you owe him twenty-four hours a day? Is his business going to be our whole life?

DOUG. But it's my business too. Maybe you're just not cut out

for this—well, you're stuck with this anyway—— (*Puts his coffee cup down on end table.*)

HELEN. Do you feel stuck with me?

DOUG. (*He rises—grabs her.*) Oh, Charlie, you idiot, I love you. (*He takes her arm, pulls her down on sofa. They sit together on the couch. She throws her arms about him.*)

HELEN. Oh, Doug, do you think I'll ever really fit?

DOUG. Look, I have to do a lot of boring, silly things—sit around and drink with people, hold their hands, listen to their golf scores—I'm not particularly crazy about doing it. If you're going on a safari, do mosquito bites matter? If you're going to climb a mountain, do you let the snow bother you? It's all part of the adventure. That's what *business* is to me, darling—it's *my* kind of adventure—(*Rises, crosses* C.) *my* excitement. Don't let machine shops and smoke stacks fool you—maybe they don't look as—as creative as paint brushes or canvas or a fiddle—but they're *my* tools! (*Crosses* L.) They're what I use to make things. Good, useful things! (*He points to the Turbojet Control model on the console table and crosses to below steps* L.) Something like that. Do you see that gadget over there? Without a thing like that a jet plane would explode in the air—— Do you think I'm crazy? I think that thing is *beautiful!* It all started up here—— (*He points to his head.*) And there it is. Two years of my life are in that thing. It's been worth it. Every minute has been worth it! And when you smell blood—and you know you're coming close to the kill! (*Crosses* C.) Like tonight! With McHenry! I tell you, darling—business is—is—— (*He stops suddenly and laughs, self-consciously.*) At least it's not felony. It's not playing a piano in a sporting house. (*Helen rushes to him and throws her arms around him. Doug responds, his arms tighten around her. They're not even aware, an instant later, that Amy Underhill has entered. She leaves the doors open.*)

AMY. (*Pleased with what she sees. Standing on platform at rail she looks at her watch.*) At ten in the morning! Hi——

DOUG. (*Still holding Helen.*) Hello, Amy!

HELEN. (*Turning her head.*) Good morning, Amy——

AMY. I hate to break this up—but Helen and I have a date—don't we? (*Helen and Doug break their embrace.*)

DOUG. (*To Helen.*) Amy promised to stop in and give you a few tips on our party—— (*He replaces chair up to* L. *of round table.*)

AMY. (*Coming down steps* L.) Dyke-Wilcox may have a Turbojet

Control as good as ours—but we can't let them throw a party as good as ours! Can they?

DOUG. No, ma'm! (*Doug crosses to* D. L. *door.*)

AMY. When I get through with her, she'll not only be *on* the team—she'll be all time all-American! (*Doug exits* D. L. *Amy gets her first real look at Helen, turns to her,* C.) You don't look so good this morning, honey.

HELEN. Well, I —— (*Helen crosses to round table, starts to stack dishes on tray. Leaves coffee carafe on table, and her own cup and saucer.*)

AMY. Heard all about it. (*Crosses up* C., *takes off her coat, leaves it on chair* R. *of round table.*) Mustn't waste your time on just anybody, doesn't pay off.—By the way, honey, you were very good last night with Hap Nielson. He's a member of the American Legion—and sometimes he forgets which convention he's at. (*Looking around the room.*) Now this room will be great for the party. (*She sees miscellaneous well read books on the desk—4 of them Helen took from her suitcase in Act I.*) Seems to me they could have found some better looking books to go with that desk.

HELEN. Those are mine. (*Crosses* R. *below sofa with tray of dishes. Doug comes back from the bedroom putting on his suit coat.*)

AMY. (*Above sofa.*) You brought all those books down here? What for?

HELEN. To read. (*Telephone rings. She exits* D. R.) I'll get it—I'll get it —— (*She puts tray down in pantry and reaches through pass-through window, gets phone. Doug looks startled.*) Hello. . . . Yes. . . . Yes, it is. . . . Long distance! Oh, thank God!

DOUG. (*Over* L. *above* D. L. *chair.*) Are you expecting a call?

HELEN. Well, I'm always expecting something. (*Her face darkens. She speaks into phone.*) Pittsburgh? (*Disappointedly, she turns to Doug.*) It's for you. Carson Machine and Foundry.

DOUG. I'll take it in the bedroom. (*He exits* D. L., *closing the door. Amy crosses to* R. *of round table.*)

HELEN. (*From pantry.*) Would you like a cup of coffee, Amy?

AMY. (*Agreeing—takes off gloves, puts them, with bag, on round table.*) Black. Got to watch the time, though. (*Helen re-enters with Amy's coffee cup. She stops at phone, listens, realizes Doug has picked it up in his bedroom. She then hangs up.*) I have to go shopping with Amalgamated Metals.

HELEN. (*Crosses below sofa to below round table.*) Amy, tell me something—could you get out of this shopping trip?

AMY. (*Shocked. Sits* R. *of round table.*) Amalgamated Metals is our company's chief supplier!

HELEN. Why do you have to go? That's what I don't understand. (*Sits* L. *of round table.*)

AMY. Arthur was a junior clerk when I married him. (*Helen pours two cups of coffee.*) Now he's a big shot on the team. He says he couldn't have done it without me, and he's right. I don't have any gripes. What's good for business is good for Amy. Business buys me what I want.

HELEN. Isn't there anything you want that can't be bought?

AMY. Not any more. (*Drinks her coffee.*) When I was a bride—every record I played on the victrola, I used to believe the words. Can you beat that? I used to dream how I'd have a kitchen with a fireplace in it, dutch tiles, yellow curtains at the windows —— (*Drinks.*)

HELEN. It sounds lovely.

AMY. And now I'm *rich!* I've got a hired cook. I don't go in the kitchen. What do I care about yellow curtains? (*Drinks.*) That stuff you hear on the victrola—that's just words—music ——

HELEN. (*Drinks. Suddenly.*) Amy, I am scared about tonight. (*Looking at* D. L. *door.*)

AMY. Oh, now, honey, take it easy. You're not tuned up yet.

HELEN. I just never realized so much could ride on one party!

AMY. (*Starts searching in bag.*) You won't let 'em down, honey. (*Bag on table. Puts on her glasses, picks out a small piece of paper.*) Here's what I found out. . . . Spencer McHenry, President of McHenry Motors Corporation. Smart business man. Used to being catered to.

HELEN. I'll wait on him, hand and foot!

AMY. Likes to tell corny jokes ——

HELEN. I'll roll in the aisles!

AMY. Has what they call "an eye for the ladies."

HELEN. I'll wear my new dress—the one with no top!

AMY. Now wait a minute, honey—(*Takes off her glasses and looks at Helen.*) you're supposed to be working for Norse Wagner —not soliciting for it! Besides, there's a Mrs. McHenry—— (*Puts on glasses, gets another paper from bag.*)

HELEN. Oh, yes. What's she like?

AMY. (*Consulting her notes.*) Myra McHenry. A bitch. (*Tears up paper. Helen looks alarmed, offers ash tray to Amy, who drops scraps of paper in it.*) No problem—that kind is easy to handle. (*Helen worried.*) Whatever she says—agree with her. Whatever she wants—give it to her. Whatever she thinks—you think so too. In fact, you think so twice as much. (*A long stare at Helen.*) Too bad you're so attractive. Right away that's bound to make her suspicious. Well, I don't know what we can do about that. (*Looks over at desk.*) Now those books—we can do something about *them.* (*Rises, crosses* R. *above sofa to desk.*)

HELEN. The books? (*Rises.*)

AMY. You mustn't let Mrs. McHenry walk in and catch you with *these!*

HELEN. (*Rises, crosses down* C.) No books?

AMY. Best sellers are okay. And stuff like that. (*Loading her arms with the eight books on the desk.*) But you mustn't let on you read anything deep. Mrs. McHenry would take it the wrong way. (*Reading titles.*) "The Affluent Society," "Walden" by Thoreau. (*Amy crosses to Helen below the sofa and piles four books into Helen's arms.*) Get them out of sight, honey, right *now.*

HELEN. But I still don't see why ——

AMY. If Mrs. McHenry comes in here and sees these books—she'll think you're putting on the dog. She'll think you're stuck-up.

HELEN. Stuck-up? Because I read?

AMY. Now, honey, you mustn't be intellectual. You must be "real people." (*She drops to her knees below sofa.*) Take my advice, it's better to be dumb than deep. (*Amy pushes the books under the couch and out of sight. Helen has gone below her to* R. *of her to down on her knees and hands her the other four books which Amy hides.*) Now the first thing to remember is act gracious.

HELEN. (*Memorizing.*) Act gracious.

AMY. (*Rises,* L. *crosses to below round table.*) Whatever the McHenrys say—be fascinated!

HELEN. Be fascinated.

AMY. (*Crosses* R. *to* L. *of Helen.*) And no matter how much they complain about their aches and pains—ooze sympathy. You see what I mean?

HELEN. Forgive me, Amy, but doesn't all—(*Gets up from floor, sits* C. *of sofa.*) that strike you as being frightfully insincere?

AMY. (*Surprised.*) Honey, you're not supposed to be sincere.

You're supposed to be gracious. (*She sits on* L. *end of sofa.*) That's the way you help your husband if he's a business man. If he was a farmer, you'd milk the cows.

HELEN. (*Thinking it over.*) If he was a blackmailer, I'd lick the stamps.

AMY. You see, you've got to build Doug up ——

HELEN. But Doug doesn't need *me* to build him up!

AMY. You're his "adoring little wife," whatever he does or says *you* think he's right—the way I do with Art. Now at the same time that you build Doug up, you've got to break him down.

HELEN. Break him down!

AMY. *Humanize* him.

HELEN. Doug's the finest human being I've ever met in my life. He doesn't need me to ——

AMY. You've got to show the McHenrys that Doug is "real people." So you drop a few remarks—"Doug's just filled the house with dogs."

HELEN. Doug's just crazy about dogs!

AMY. Or the woman next door has four kids and they're all just crazy about Doug.

HELEN. Doug's just crazy about the woman next door. (*Amy frowns. Sounds of convention revellers are heard offstage* L., *singing "Back Home In Indiana."*)

AMY. (*Rises, crosses* L., *gets coat from back of chair* R. *of round table and puts it on.*) That sounds like some of our team now. I must be running along or Amalgamated Metals will be having kittens in the lobby.

HELEN. (*Crosses below Amy to* L. *of round table.*) Thank you very much, Amy.

AMY. (*She laughs. Starts towards Helen.*) You just keep your eye on me at the party tonight. I'll cue you in. By the way, whom do you want to sit next to at lunch today? Great Lakes Plumbing or Apco Screw and Wire?

HELEN. (L. *of round table.*) Is there any choice?

AMY. *Remember,* they're both big accounts of Norse Wagner. *Be sure* to say something nice to them. (*Crosses below Helen and up steps* L. *to door platform.*)

HELEN. Something—nice?

AMY. (*Turns, with sudden thought.*) Oh! That's the most im-

portant rule of all, honey. Be sure to say something nice to everyone you meet.

HELEN. Everyone?

AMY. (*On platform at rail.*) Honey, there isn't a single person in this world you can't find *something* nice to say to him. (*Amy exits,* U. L., *leaving doors open. Helen remains staring into space as if memorizing all she has learned in the last few minutes. She moves towards* C. *pantomiming saying something nice to everyone. Chuck enters.*)

CHUCK. Doug still around, Mrs. Sayre? Mr. Wagner would like to see him right away ——

HELEN. (*Startled at the interruption. Indicating bedroom.*) I think he's in there telephoning.

CHUCK. I'll wait. (*With a look at her. Crosses down steps* L. *to* C.) If you don't mind. (*He sits on sofa and takes out a cigarette. Helen works to above* L. *corner of sofa. She stares at him, trying to think of something nice to say. She scrutinizes him closely from head to foot, searches her mind, frowns at him. Chuck begins to look for matches, first in his* R. *pocket, then feels his* L. *pocket. He sees her looking at him. He squirms under her gaze.*)

HELEN. (*With a smile—still searching.*) Chuck ——

CHUCK. Yes?

HELEN. (*Giving up with a shrug.*) I can't think of a thing. (*Chuck starts to get up.*)

FAST CURTAIN

ACT II

SCENE 2

That evening.

As the curtain rises, Doug is standing at a portable bar, which has replaced the desk S. R. *The telephone is on the pass-through shelf. The end table has been moved from the* L. *end to the* R. *end of the sofa, and the turbojet model is on it. A small table and two chairs are on the platform in the* U. C. *corner, and a small end table is*

above the armchair, and an ottoman has been placed on-stage of the armchair. All the doors are closed. Doug is wearing a white tux coat. He is shaking a large silver cocktail shaker strenuously. After a moment, he pauses with fatigue, looks at his watch, and calls toward the bedroom.

DOUG. Helen?

HELEN. (*From the bedroom.*) Huh?

DOUG. Honey, we only have five minutes!

HELEN. (*Still off.*) Oh—I'm coming —— (*Doug stirs martinis in a pitcher on the bar. Helen enters,* D. L., *leaving the door open. She is wearing a striking evening gown and has in her hands a pack of cigarettes and a Convention Badge. She checks the cigarette dish on the* D. L. *end table, sees it is full, goes to the round table and empties her cigarette pack in the dish there. She crumples the empty pack and puts it in the cut flower box on the round table. There is also a vase of flowers on the table. She then places the chair* L. *of the round table a little* D. S. *in a more prominent position.*) Oh, Doug, would you do the hook on the back of my dress? (*She goes to him,* D. R., *takes the shaker and turns her back so he can hook the dress, but while he is trying to fasten the hook she starts shaking the shaker.*) "Eight strong men" —— (*He grabs her shoulders to hold her still. When the dress is hooked, he takes the shaker from her and continues to shake, watching the following pantomime with amusement. Putting on her convention badge.*) Now I've got to remember—"be gracious, be fascinated, be dumb" —— Oh, look, Doug, I want to try something, "role-playing." (*Doug stops shaking. She sweeps across the stage to up* L. *steps to welcome her imaginary guests.*) Oh, Mr. McHenry, I'm so glad you could come to our party. (*Indicates sofa.*) Won't you sit there, Mr. McHenry? And you, Mrs. McHenry—(*Indicates armchair* D. R.) over there. (*Does an imaginary tap on Mrs. McHenry's rear as she passes. Helen sits on the sofa to talk with Mr. McHenry.*) Lovely Turbojet control, don't you think? (*A pause —she laughs.*) No, I don't believe I have heard that story. (*She listens and then bursts into loud artificial laugh. Suddenly her face falls. She doesn't think she'll ever be able to handle all this.*) Doug, I don't think I'll ever make it.

DOUG. Charlie, get the canapes. (*He continues shaking.*)

HELEN. Okay, boss. (*Helen goes to kitchen* D. R. *and returns with a bowl of olives and a plate of stuffed clams on the half shell. Amy and Arthur Underhill enter* U. L. *in evening clothes and badges. Amy is wearing an enormous corsage of lavender colored orchids. Underhill is carrying several magazines. They leave the doors open.*)

AMY. (*Crosses down steps* L. *to* C.) Good evening! Good evening!

HELEN. (*Going out door* D. R.) Good evening, Amy. Arthur.

UNDERHILL. (*Crosses down steps* L. *to below sofa, places his 4 magazines on top of turbojet.*) You look like a million, kid.

AMY. (C.) Honey, where's your corsage?

HELEN. (*Coming back from pantry with canapes which she puts on sofa table. She points to a pile of boxes on end table* R. *of sofa.*) Over there. I haven't had a chance to open them yet. (*Amy crosses above sofa to the boxes on end table and gathers them up as she reads cards.*)

UNDERHILL. (*To Doug.*) Howsa boy? (*Indicates shaker.*) What's that? (*Helen has returned to* C.—*looking at herself in mirror—adjusting her dress.*)

DOUG. Orleans Fizz. Myra McHenry's drink.

AMY. (*Over* R. *Reading off cards on flowers.*) Pacific Sanitary, Apco Screw and Wire, Babcock and Babcock, Invincible Mounting and Finishing, Shaeffer-Gordon Company.

UNDERHILL. (*Listening to her as she reads.*) You got Babcock's on—she'd better wear Shaeffer-Gordon's. (*Amy takes the Shaeffer-Gordon corsage to Helen at* C. *then puts the other 4 boxes on table* U. C. *on platform.*)

HELEN. (C. *Opening lid.*) But the color—with this dress.

AMY. (*Up* C.) Doesn't matter, honey, you got to wear it ——

HELEN. It's terribly big. (*Holds it across her chest. It is an exact duplicate of the one Amy is wearing only larger—enormous and a garish lavender.*)

AMY. (*Takes empty box from her and puts it on pile with the rest* U. C.) We'll pin it on, somehow —— (*Crosses downstage to Helen* C.)

HELEN. *Must* I?

DOUG. Oh, sure.

UNDERHILL. (*Below* R. *corner of sofa.*) Shaeffer-Gordon's the biggest steel fitting jobber in the East—you show up in the ball-

room without that corsage they'll wonder what the hell's the matter ——

HELEN. Really?

UNDERHILL. I mean, you know, there might be hurt feelings —— *(Helen looks at Doug. He shrugs and nods. Amy starts to pin the corsage onto the shoulder strap of her dress. She gets it so high Helen's face knocks into it when she turns her head. Amy lowers the corsage. Doug puts the shaker on sofa end table and picks up magazines. Helen and Amy cross up* C. *Helen gets flower boxes.)*

DOUG. Here, Art, have a work-out. *(Underhill takes the shaker. Reading off the titles.)* Yachting, the Boatman, Popular Sailing, Cruising and Yachting—what's all this? *(Crosses up to bar—leave magazines on bottom shelf.)*

UNDERHILL. *(Shaking the cocktails.)* McHenry's a yachtsman, isn't he?

HELEN. *(Crosses down* C. *Indicating corsage boxes in her arms.)* What'll I do with all these?

AMY. Put 'em in the ice box till they die, then you throw them away. *(Helen takes the 5 corsage boxes to the kitchen* D. R. *Ice box door slams. Amy goes to round table. Gets a stack of 4 ash trays—goes* D. L. *to small end table, sees it has its ash tray—then back to round table and leaves tray, then leaves tray on* U. C. *table and sofa table, then stops to eat an olive behind sofa table.)*

DOUG. *(Putting Underhill's highball on end table.)* So you've been boning up?

UNDERHILL. *(As he shakes cocktails.)* Practical Seamanship, self taught. Ask me anything. Port, Starboard. Red Buoys, Black Buoys, Sloop. Yawl. Ketch, Schooner. Anything!

DOUG. You know, I've seen a lot of McHenry this past year—but it's all been strictly business ——

UNDERHILL. We'll soften him up. We can always talk about golf. We can always talk about ball games. Golf and baseball are safe subjects. I got a couple of new jokes —— *(Helen comes back from the pantry* D. R. *Wagner and Lockwood are entering and come down steps* L. *Both in evening clothes; Wagner wears a badge. He closes the door behind him. They all exchange greetings.)*

HELEN. *(Crosses* C. *to greet them.)* Dr. Lockwood, you did come, didn't you? *(He looks nonplussed. Helen gets a stiff look from Wagner as he sees her spectacular dress. She turns to Lockwood*

who is about to sit on the sofa. Doug at bar mixing Wagner a highball. Wagner turns up C., *shakes Amy's hand. She has moved in behind sofa to greet him.)* Oh, Dr. Lockwood—do you mind—I thought we'd have Mr. McHenry there and you over there. *(Indicates chair* D. L. *She picks up cut flower box from round table and goes off* D. L. *Wagner crosses below sofa to Doug. Underhill still shaking cocktails below* R. *end sofa.)*

LOCKWOOD. Certainly. *(He crosses* L. *to indicated chair.)*

WAGNER. Everything all set, Doug?

DOUG. *(Gives Wagner highball.)* All set.

WAGNER. Any particular way you're going to —— *(Amy has crossed behind sofa to over* R. *near bar.)*

DOUG. Let me sort of see how things go—Scotch, Dr. Lockwood?

LOCKWOOD. *(Standing* D. L.*)* Fine, thank you.

WAGNER. If we could only read his mind—if you could just get him to *say* something ——

DOUG. I'll feel him out. *(Turns up to bar to pour Martini for Amy.)*

WAGNER. *(Below* R. *corner of sofa.)* I can't go through another day like this. We've got to know before tomorrow ——

DOUG. *(Hands Amy her martini.)* Don't worry. Remember we have hours—the whole evening —— *(Knock at dooor. Art puts shaker on bar. Amy puts ash tray on sofa end table and on the end table above* D. R. *chair.)*

WAGNER. Here they are. *(Wagner crosses* L. *below sofa, then above round table to railing. Chuck enters first to* U. S. *end of railing, then Myra straight on to railing, then Spencer to below Myra and then Marge scoots on to below Chuck. They leave the doors open. They are all in evening dress. Chuck and Marge wear badges and the two women wear the ubiquitous orchid corsages. Myra McHenry is a large woman, expensively dressed and carefully preserved. She has had her way most of her life but it hasn't mitigated her fundamental nastiness. She gets to rail* C. *position. Spencer McHenry has a quizzical, intelligent expression on his face and an appreciative gleam in his eye whenever he looks at Helen. He is in a good humor and ready for a good time. He is downstage of Myra. Helen, Amy and Lockwood are the only ones who have never met the McHenrys before. The others exchange greetings.)*

DOUG. (*As he crosses to below* L. *end of sofa.*) Hello, Myra.
MYRA. Hello, Doug.
DOUG. Spencer ——
McHENRY. Hello, Doug.
WAGNER. (*At railing.*) Myra, Spence ——
McHENRY. John —— (*Starts down steps* L.)
CHUCK and MARGE. (*Upstage end of platform. Together.*) Good evening, Mr. Wagner.
WAGNER. Good evening.
DOUG. Spencer, I think you know everybody here. (*Myra moves down the steps behind McHenry.*)
AMY. (*Crosses in to* L. C.—*Shakes hands with McHenry.*) I don't believe I've had the pleasure ——
DOUG. Oh. Amy Underhill, Art's wife. You know Art.
UNDERHILL. (*Over* R.) Ship ahoy.
McHENRY. (*Laughs.*) Art ——
DOUG. This is Dr. Lockwood—Mr. and Mrs. McHenry. (*Helen is trapped between McHenry and Dr. Lockwood, and Lockwood tries to dodge around her but she can't seem to get out of his way. A step upstage—then down—then up again—which clears the way for Lockwood to shake hands with McHenry.*) And this is my wife Helen.
McHENRY. How do you do? (*Helen nods to Myra—a small curtsy to McHenry who is looking at her with pleasure—moves over to Amy* D. C., *turning around in confused manner—facing up stage. She has reached Amy who turns her around to face the McHenrys. Doug goes below sofa to bar to pour Orleans Fizz and ready serving tray. Wagner moves behind sofa to* U. R. *where he watches the proceedings.*) Well! (*As he starts to move towards the chair* R. *of round table. Marge and Chuck move down steps* L. *to join Myra and Lockwood where they quietly shake hands.*)
UNDERHILL. (*Crosses to McHenry between sofa and round table.*) Bet it was a great day on the water today.
HELEN. (*A step below sofa, indicating sofa she had previously selected.*) Oh, Mr. McHenry, wouldn't you prefer this couch?
McHENRY. (*At* R. *of round table.*) This is all right. (*Indicates chair beside him and squares it to front.*) How about you here next to me where I can look at you? (*He indicates chair* L. *of round table. She crosses and sits in chair* L. *of table. Myra turns and stares at her.*)

UNDERHILL. (*Still* C. *with McHenry.*) I said, bet it was a great day on the water today. Lee scuppers under, right?

McHENRY. (*Turns to him.*) What's that?

HELEN. (*Seeing Myra standing by her, she rises, indicating* D. R. *chair across the room—waving Amy, who has just gotten ready to sit in it, out of the way.*) Mrs. McHenry, how would you—feel about that chair?

MYRA. (*Frostily.*) No—no deep chair for me, thank you —— (*Sits in chair* L. *of round table to keep her eye on McHenry. Helen crosses to below sofa. Doug makes 3 highballs on tray. There are also 2 Martinis on this tray.*)

UNDERHILL. (*Still trying.*) If you ask me—no sight in the world like a full spinnaker in a fresh breeze ——

McHENRY. (*Sits* R. *of round table.*) Spinnaker?

UNDERHILL. When you get out that old chart and compass and start laying down a course—that's the life, eh, boy?

McHENRY. I hired the tub. (*All heads turn.*) I don't know a damn thing about sailing. (*Rises, crosses to below* R. *end of sofa to talk to Helen.*) Well, Mrs. Sayre —— (*Helen is in front of sofa. Underhill looks pained for an instant.*)

MARGE. (*Behind Myra's chair—jumping in.*) That's the most gorgeous stole I ever saw in my entire life, Mrs. McHenry. (*Amy sits down* R. *armchair.*)

MYRA. Thank you, my dear.

MARGE. (*Helps Myra remove it and leaves it on back of Myra's chair.*) Isn't that stole becoming to Mrs. McHenry, Helen?

HELEN. (*Below sofa. Eagerly.*) Lovely—mink-wise —— (*Doug brings the Orleans Fizz and tray with 3 highballs and 2 cocktails to Helen* D. R. *She starts to drink the Fizz. Doug points to Myra and Helen wipes the edge of glass with palm of her hand—her back to Myra—then crosses to below round table and hands it to Myra—who places it on table and never touches it. Helen has gone up* L. *and leaning against railing. Doug has crossed behind sofa to* U. C.*—given highball to McHenry and takes tray to Helen over* L. *by railing.*)

UNDERHILL. (*Sitting* R. *of round table. To Myra.*) I guess Mrs. McHenry must be the nautical member of the family ——?

MYRA. Most of the time I'm seasick. (*Doug is handing McHenry his highball.*)

MARGE. I'm sure *my* tummy'd be upset.

MYRA. Mrs. Sayre, do *you* like boats?

HELEN. (*Crosses* D. L. *with tray. Chuck and Marge take Martinis from the tray, Dr. Lockwood, a highball. The last one is her own.*) Well, I—I —— (*She looks towards Amy for advice.*)

MYRA. I hate them.

HELEN. (*Eagerly.*) I hate them too. (*Crosses* L. C. *Doug is at bar making his own highball.*)

MYRA. Especially boats with masts on them.

HELEN. (C.) *Especially!* (*Crosses* D. R.—*gives tray to Doug. He takes it to bar. Underhill rises uncomfortably and moves to behind* L. *corner of sofa. Chuck works up on door platform where he stands at* U. S. *end of railing. Marge works below railing to chair* L. *of* U. C. *table where she sits.*)

McHENRY. (*Front of* L. *end of sofa.*) I'm sorry to hear that. I was thinking you and Doug might come for a little sail with us tomorrow ——

WAGNER. Tomorrow? (*Crosses down to* R. *corner of sofa.*)

McHENRY. Go out for the day—give us a chance to talk—maybe fish —— (*Crosses to* R. *side of round table.*)

DOUG. (*Has moved in down* R. *to below* R. *end of sofa. Helen is below* C. *of sofa.*) That sounds great, Spencer, we'd love it.

McHENRY. (*Turns back to Doug.*) I don't think your wife would be too happy ——

DOUG. I'm sure Helen would ——

HELEN. Of course I *would* ——

McHENRY. Listen, Beautiful, I wouldn't give you a bad time for the world. Now you just forget it. We'll drop the whole idea. (*He sits* R. *of round table. Helen thinks she has put her foot in it—looks frightened, from one to another of the crowd—looking last at Wagner over* R.—*who gives her the worst stare. She sits in* C. *of sofa. A pause. The situation a bit over, they all start to speak at once—to release the tension. A general laughter—pause—then repeat the general chatter—Marge speaks.*)

MARGE. (*Who has moved down from her chair.*) Oh, you go ahead, Mr. Underhill ——

UNDERHILL. (*Rises. Gets his notebook of jokes out—puts his drink down on sofa table. Is* C.) Uh—say I heard a couple of real cute stories last night. It seems this guy walked into a bar and —— (*Marge crosses up and sits on chair* U. L. *Chuck on platform beside her.*)

McHENRY. That the one about brain surgery?

UNDERHILL. (*Roughly.*) No! No! No!!—(*Then thinks to whom he is speaking—becomes over-polite.*) Oh! Which one is that?

McHENRY. Well, that's a pretty funny story ——

HELEN. (*From sofa.*) Do tell it, Mr. McHenry.

McHENRY. It's no good unless it's told well—I can't do it justice —— (*All ad lib., yes—yes.*)

DOUG. Come on, Spencer, let's hear it. (*Art sits beside Helen on* L. *end of sofa. McHenry rises to* C., *leaving his drink on round table. He enjoys this and he acts it out elaborately. Myra, still in her chair, shudders and turns away to* L.)

McHENRY. Well—this drunk went into a bar and his hands are shaking like this. He says to the bartender: "G-give me a d-double Scotch, Joe." But he can hardly get it down his hands are shaking so much. "What are you up to these days?" the bartender asks the drunk. "S-s-same old th-th-thing, Joe," says the drunk. "B-br-brain surgery." (*A dead silence—McHenry disappointedly turns back to the round table for his drink—then Helen laughs first and loudest. Immediately the others join her, except Myra.*)

UNDERHILL. "Brain surgery." Say, I've got to make a note of that. (*He takes out notebook and pencil to do so.*)

McHENRY. (*To Helen with a grin.*) Say, have you heard the one about the little man who walked into a (*He wants to get beside Helen. Underhill rises—goes up* C. *McHenry takes his place—*L. *end of sofa.*) restaurant and asked the waiter for an elephant sandwich? Now if anyone's heard this—stop me —— (*They all shake their heads—ad lib. "No"—except Myra.*) This little man ——

MYRA. (*Clears her throat loudly.*) I've heard it. (*Lockwood sits down in* L. *chair.*)

McHENRY. I know you have, Myra, but these other people haven't, so—let me tell it.

HELEN. Mr. McHenry tells stories so well. He puts so much punch into them.

MYRA. You mustn't lead him on, Mrs. Sayre ——

McHENRY. Come on, Myra, this will only take a minute ——

HELEN. An elephant sandwich. Such a promising beginning.

MYRA. No, Spencer never knows when to stop.

McHENRY. (*To Helen.*) Never mind, Beautiful. I'll see that you hear the rest of the story later on.

HELEN. I'll count on that, Mr. McHenry.

McHENRY. We'll go off in a corner somewhere —— (*He leans toward her.*)

MYRA. Really, Spencer, I'm sure Mrs. Sayre has better things to do.

HELEN. Well—(*Rises and crosses below him to* C.) of course, I have —— (*All give her a withering look. Then aware of what she has said, turns to him to apologize.*) I mean I—I —— (*Turns to Myra.*) Whatever you say, Mrs. McHenry, I agree with you. (*Moves to chair* R. *of round table and sits. Wagner crosses around* R. *end to below sofa to glare at Helen.*)

UNDERHILL. (*Moves in* C. *Then sits on* L. *arm of sofa.*) Baseball! Now, there's a game for you! (*Doug stands* R. *of end of sofa.*)

WAGNER. (*Below* R. *end of sofa.*) Yes, sir.

HELEN. (*Seated* R. *of round table.*) Doug's just crazy about baseball. Of course the only baseball he gets these days is playing with the children next door. (*All turn to Doug.*)

DOUG. (*Raising his eyebrows.*) What's that? (*All turn to Helen.*)

HELEN. Oh—uh—Doug's just crazy about children. (*All turn to look at him.*)

AMY. (*Prompting him from* D. R. *chair.*) Yes!

DOUG. What children? (*Off stage the sound of Male Voices can be heard singing the Norse Wagner Song.*)

HELEN. (*With an imploring look.*) You know, darling—the ones next door! (*Doug gives her a glowering look. McHenry has moved slightly to a position in the* C. *of the sofa.*)

DOUG. (*To McHenry—sits beside him on* R. *end of sofa.*) Plan to see any exhibition games while you're here, Spencer?

WAGNER. (*Crosses below sofa to steps* L. *then up by doors to listen.*) That sounds like some of our men. They're singing our song!

LOCKWOOD. Ah—the Company Anthem! (*Chuck is still on* U. S. *end of door platform.*)

HELEN. Do the companies have songs?

UNDERHILL. (*On* L. *arm of sofa.*) Had it written by a regular musician! Use it to open our sales meetings every Monday morning.

LOCKWOOD. (*Leaves his drink on end table at his chair. Rises.*) I'd like to hear it. Why don't you sing it for us?

UNDERHILL. It's just a peppy song. Puts the guys in the right frame of mind.
LOCKWOOD. Come on, sing it.
DOUG. (*Rising. To change the subject.*) Dr. Lockwood, couldn't I freshen your drink?
LOCKWOOD. It's all right, thanks.
DOUG. (*Trying again.*) Would anybody like another drink?
LOCKWOOD. (*Firmly.*) I'd like to hear that song. (*Doug sits again on* R. *end of sofa.*)
UNDERHILL. (*Glass down on sofa table.*) Oh, why not? Come on, Chuck. (*He goes to Chuck at* U. L. *corner of platform and with arms around each other's shoulders, they start to sing. Gradually the others join in. First Wagner, then Marge who rises immediately, then Amy. Helen gets the idea towards the end and rises. Doug does* not *sing. Myra and McHenry are stoney-faced.*)

NORSE WAGNER COMPANY SONG
(Sung to tune of "Cornell Song.")

We love you,
Noble Norse Wagner,
You're our heart of hearts.
(*Chuck snaps his fingers to Marge who is standing* U. C. *She joins in singing.*)
We are true to dear Norse Wagner,
All component parts!
(*Art motions to Amy—she rises awkwardly from* D. R. *chair and sings. Helen, seeing this, rises and faces front as though saluting a flag.*)
Our steel valves and malleable fittings
Make our banners gleam.
Hail to thee gallant Norse Wagner,
We are members of your team!
(*When song is finished, there is general applause. Helen sits* R. *of round table.*)
LOCKWOOD. America's new folk music! (*Crosses down to* D. L. *end table and gets his drink.*)
CHUCK. (*To McHenry. Crosses down to* L. *corner of sofa.*) You should hear that with a thousand voices. (*Marge crosses up* C. *on platform—sits in her chair.*)

UNDERHILL. (*Crosses to Chuck's* L. *To McHenry.*) We had it written by a regular musician.

HELEN. Isn't that Cornell's song? (*Doug rises—crosses to bar. Underhill and Chuck glare at her. Chuck goes up back of sofa, grabs an olive from the bowl and then out on terrace up* C.—*Underhill crosses up* C. *There is a pause. Helen, realizing she has said something wrong, looks at them, then at Wagner who is up on the door platform. He gives her a withering look.*)

UNDERHILL. (*Finally. In* C.) Yes, sir, baseball.

WAGNER. Yes, sir.

UNDERHILL. The great American game ——

McHENRY. (*Still seated* C. *of sofa.*) Whenever I hear somebody say that—damn it, it makes me mad.

UNDERHILL. Uh—uh, it does? (*Wagner crosses around* U. S. *end of railing to behind round table. Chuck is* U. C. *on platform.*)

LOCKWOOD. (*Over* L. *by his chair. To McHenry.*) You mean the only real American game is Lacrosse. (*Sits* D. L.)

McHENRY. *Right!* The Indians were playing Lacrosse before Christopher Columbus even got here. (*All ad lib. surprise.*)

UNDERHILL. (*Behind* L. *end of sofa.*) That so? Well! Well!

McHENRY. I played Lacrosse for four years at the University of Maryland and for eight years after that with the Baltimore Club. The game's tough. It's got muscles. (*Underhill crosses back of sofa. Doug has taken a small object from the bar—a tube, part of the turbojet control device.*)

DOUG. (*Beside* R. *end of sofa.*) Say, Spencer—if you were so hot at Lacrosse, let's see you catch that. (*He tosses the tube to McHenry who catches it. Wagner crosses in to* L. *corner of sofa. Chuck and Underhill behind it. Chuck* L. *end, Underhill* R. *end—they lean over McHenry's shoulder.*) Recognize it?

McHENRY. (*Glancing at the tube.*) Stacked ceramic tube. I recognize it all right ——

UNDERHILL. Just look at that thing. Did you ever see a milling job like that? (*Pointing to the turbojet model on end table* R. *of sofa.*) And it's only got three of those tubes in it.

CHUCK. Ceiling 300 degrees centigrade.

McHENRY. That so? (*Tosses tube to Doug who puts it on the bar . . . handing his glass over his shoulder to Underhill who leaves it on sofa table. Rises.*) The time we were playing Navy, I got the ball behind my own goal and —— Anyone here know how

to play Lacrosse? (*All ad lib. no. Chuck is up* C. *on the platform. Underhill is behind* R. *end of sofa. Wagner Lockwood has moved* L. *to behind round table. Puts drink down on* D. L. *end table.*)

HELEN. (*Still seated* R. *of round table.*) No, but I'm ready to learn. (*McHenry a step to Helen.*)

McHENRY. Well, O.K. Now here's ——

LOCKWOOD. (*Rises* D. L.) When I was a kid in Ithaca, we played Lacrosse in the streets instead of baseball ——

McHENRY. (*Glowing.*) Now that's what I like to hear. I'll show you, Mrs. Sayre. (*A step* D. *to Lockwood.*) Come here. (*Lockwood takes position* L. C. *McHenry* C.) Now here's how we did a body check. We'd just pile right in. (*Does so. Lockwood side steps* U. S. *and Wagner moves* D. L. *to catch McHenry.*) ~~—Please, John, please.~~

LOCKWOOD. (*Crosses* D. L. *to get his drink.*) You play rough. We used to go for the stick instead of the man.

McHENRY. (*Crosses* D. *to* R. *of Lockwood.*) You're all right—I'm sorry. I don't believe I caught your name —— (*Shakes his hand.*)

WAGNER. (*Crosses down between them.*) This is Dr. Lockwood, Spencer. We're honored to have him with us. He's our banquet speaker tomorrow night. (*Helen rises—crosses up to sofa table for the two plates of canapes.*)

McHENRY. Lockwood. Lockwood. Why, yes. Say, I've been reading your stuff.

HELEN. (*Urgently—thrusting plate of clams at McHenry.*) Clams? (*She forces him away from Lockwood to over* R. C. *below sofa.*)

McHENRY. (*Helping himself.*) Stuffed, eh? (*Eats it. Wagner crosses up to between railing and round table.*)

MYRA. (*To Lockwood over* D. L.) So you're the banquet speaker. Well, how very interesting.

HELEN. (*Crosses to below round table.*) Won't you try one, Mrs. McHenry?

MYRA. (*Dismissing and ignoring Helen.*) No, thank you.

HELEN. Please do—they're very good.

MYRA. (*Turns to Helen.*) I don't eat clams. I'm allergic to them.

HELEN. (*Eagerly.*) I'm allergic to them, too.

MYRA. I break out in spots.

HELEN. I break out in spots, too.

MYRA. (*Challenging.*) *Big* pink ones?

HELEN. (*With a look at Amy.*) Oh, little pink ones. Not as big as yours. (*Crosses* R. *McHenry puts his clam shell on Helen's plate. She leaves plates of clams and olives on end table* D. R.)

MYRA. (*Triumphantly.*) I have thirty-one different allergies and my doctor —— (*McHenry sits* C. *of sofa. Underhill hands McHenry his glass.*)

MARGE. (*Crosses down* C. *to* R. *of round table.*) Our little daughter Sally Lou is allergic to eggs. It's a terrible problem now that she's going to Nursery School. (*Helen joins Doug over* R. *by bar.*)

MYRA. Do they give her a special diet?

MARGE. Oh, yes—it's a very modern school. (*Sits* R. *of round table—Chuck joins her to her* R.)

MYRA. You mean to tell me they allow the children to do anything they want?

MARGE. They can do anything they want—so long as all the other children want to do it too.

CHUCK. (C.) Those kids learn to get along with the group if it kills them.

LOCKWOOD. (*Standing beside* D. L. *chair.*) It won't kill them, Mr. Robbins ——

CHUCK. Well, I didn't mean that. (*A step down.*)

LOCKWOOD. (*Thoughtfully.*) It might *geld* them. (*Drinks. McHenry laughs softly.*)

MARGE. (*Anxiously—rises—crosses down to* L. C.) Just what does "geld" mean exactly?

CHUCK. (*Crosses to* R. *of her.*) Never mind, Marge, it can't happen to Sally Lou. (*Helen crosses and sits* R. *end of sofa, bringing McHenry a single clam which he eats, putting shell on sofa table.*)

AMY. (*Still seated* D. R. *To Marge—trying to distract her.*) Marge —do you miss your babies?

MARGE. (*Crosses below Chuck towards Amy.*) Oh, yes—when we left home, they both cried so hard —— (*Toward Amy.*)

CHUCK. (*Stops her* R.*—puts arm around her. To Amy.*) I told Marge those kids had just better get used to the fact that Daddy's business comes first, whether they like it or not.

LOCKWOOD. (*Crosses to them* C. *To Chuck and Marge.*) The speckled spider of Southwest Rhodesia eats its young. (*Crosses below them to* R.*—humming the Norse Wagner tune. He gives his*

glass to Doug who goes to the bar. They all stare at him. Wagner sits R. *of round table.)*

McHENRY. *(Turning to Lockwood.)* As I said, Dr. Lockwood, I've been reading your stuff ——

LOCKWOOD. *(At* R. *corner of sofa.)* Glad to hear it. *(Marge and Chuck go up behind sofa. Marge starts to drink her Martini but Chuck quietly stops her.)*

McHENRY. You've certainly been giving the right people hell —— *(Doug makes drink at bar for Lockwood. Then crosses* D. R. *to Amy with cocktail pitcher and pours her a drink.)*

LOCKWOOD. I guess I'm just against anybody telling anybody else what's good for him —— *(He sits beside Helen to her* R., *leaving her squeezed between McHenry and himself.)*

McHENRY. In my day business wasn't hedged in by all these Congressional Committees—Free Enterprise meant Free Enterprise.

CHUCK. *(To Wagner—standing behind* L. *end of sofa with Marge.)* Put that on the train and see if it gets off at Washington ——

McHENRY. *(With a glance at Chuck.)* They have turned business into a dog's life ——

HELEN. *(Leaping in.)* *Dog's* just crazy about *Dougs,* aren't you, Doug? *(They all stare at her.)*

DOUG. *(Bewildered. Stops pouring Amy's Martini.)* What's that, Helen? *(He glowers at her again.)* Uh—when are you going up north, Spencer?

McHENRY. Back to the salt mines—end of the week. *(Doug puts Martini pitcher on bar and picks up his own highball.)*

MYRA. Not soon enough for me. Florida just isn't what it used to be. Everywhere you go—over-run by those perfectly dreadful people.

McHENRY. Have to be in New York by Monday ——

HELEN. New York! That's my home town. That's where we lived before we were married. *(Chuck moves to* U. C. *Marge joins Chuck* U. C. *below platform. Helen is suddenly aware of what she has said. So are the others. They glare at her.)*

MYRA. Do you like New York, Mrs. Sayre?

HELEN. Oh, yes. I think it's a wonderful city.

MYRA. Really? Those mobs of perfectly dreadful people. You see, we live in Connecticut.

MARGE. *(Crosses down to behind round table.)* I *adore* Con-

necticut. (*With a glance at Wagner who is seated* R. *of round table.*) Of course I *adore* Indiana, too.

MYRA. Where are you from originally?

MARGE. Chuckie's from Syracuse and I'm from Rochester.

MYRA. Do you know a Dickie and Dottie Williams? Dickie comes from a very prominent Rochester family.

MARGE. Why, they know Dickie and Dottie Williams!

CHUCK. (*Crosses in to behind round table to* R. *of Marge.*) And if you know Dickie and Dottie Williams you must know Chip and Chummy Gorman.

MYRA. Why, we know the Gormans very well.

MARGE. They had a spectacular wedding, champagne—wise.

CHUCK. Chippie Gorman got mixed up with this girl from Grosse Point.

MARGE. Irma Schweitzer. Does anybody know Irma Schweitzer?

UNDERHILL. (*Crosses from* U. R. *to* U. C.) She related to Larry Schweitzer? Banner Tool and Supply? (*Turns back to* S. R. *in Lockwood's general direction.*) Does anybody know Larry Schweitzer? (*Crosses to behind* C. *of sofa.*)

LOCKWOOD. Does anybody know Albert Schweitzer? (*McHenry laughs.*)

McHENRY. One thing I don't like about cruising, one gets out of touch. I've missed your last few columns in the *Journal.*

LOCKWOOD. Oh, the *Wall Street Journal?* I'm afraid ——

HELEN. (*Desperately leaning towards him.*) I *never* miss your column in the *Journal,* Dr. Lockwood. (*Lockwood stares at Helen. Takes a deep breath as realization dawns on him. Quickly.*) Let me get you a drink. (*Rises—crosses to bar and Doug gives her Lockwood's drink he has mixed earlier.*)

LOCKWOOD. (*Staring at her.*) Thank you. I need a—a transfusion. (*Helen gives it to him. Marge crosses to back of sofa. Doug turns back to bar and puts ice in his own drink.*)

MYRA. How *clever* of you—uh—Mrs. Sayre, to read the *Wall Street Journal.* I'm sure I wouldn't understand a business paper. Perhaps I'm too feminine. Do come over here, Dr. Lockwood, and tell me about your speech.

LOCKWOOD. (*Starts to rise.*) Well, I—I ——

HELEN. (*Snatches olive bowl from* D. R. *end table and offers one to Lockwood. Quickly from* R. *of* R. *end of sofa.*) I don't believe you've even *chosen* a subject yet, have you, Dr. Lockwood?

LOCKWOOD. As a matter of fact I've just discarded a few. (*Helen crosses behind* R. *end of sofa and offers olives to Underhill.*)

MYRA. (*To Lockwood.*) You must have a title at least ——

HELEN. (*Crosses to back of sofa and leans over offering olives to McHenry.*) No—I don't think he's even *picked* a title yet, have you, Dr. Lockwood?

MYRA. (*To Lockwood.*) That sounds so mysterious!

HELEN. (*Crosses* L. *to Marge but before she can get an olive Helen moves to* C. *between sofa and round table.*) He won't even tell the reporters what he's going to say. He wants to *surprise* everybody.

MYRA. (*To Lockwood.*) That makes me *very* curious. Now you must come over here and talk to me. (*Indicates chair* R. *of round table. Wagner rises from chair* R. *of round table and steps downstage. Helen glides into chair. Dr. Lockwood moves below the sofa towards the chair. To Helen.*) No, no, Dr. Lockwood. (*Helen gets up and clears well to* R. *of chair. Lockwood crosses to below chair but doesn't sit.*) Has he confided in *you,* Mrs. Sayre?

HELEN. He hasn't had a chance to tell me everything, have you, Dr. Lockwood?

LOCKWOOD. Not *everything,* Mrs. Sayre. (*Wagner has gone up on door platfom* U. L. *then to lower corner.*)

MYRA. (*To Lockwood.*) Now why don't you give us a preview of your speech? (*General ad lib. urging Lockwood to do so. Marge sits on* L. *end of sofa, Amy takes her purse and gloves and moves from* D. R. *chair to* R. *end of sofa. McHenry is sitting between them. Doug steps* D. *to on stage of* D. R. *chair. Underhill is* U. R. *above sofa. Chuck stands to* L. *of round table leaning against railing near Wagner who is standing on door platform.*)

WAGNER. Here's a suggestion, Doctor. A smooth running organization where everyone knows his place. I'm hoping you'll say something about that in your speech. Anyone who can't adjust to the team is a misfit.

LOCKWOOD. (*Still standing below chair to* R. *of round table with Helen to his* R.) Yes, that is a fascinating subject—for example—you are six feet of corporation president, Mr. Wagner, because of a misfit. The whole human race evolved because a little one-celled amoeba refused to know its place. (*Amy laughs nervously.*)

WAGNER. I don't follow you ——

LOCKWOOD. Consider that little fellow as he struggles up through the stagnant water, up through the cosmic slime. "Screwball" his teammates all call after him, but bedraggled and bruised, he pulls himself up on the shore—he takes his first deep breath and says, "I'm going to be a man"—(*Turns to Helen.*) painful experience.

HELEN. (*Pleadingly offering him olive bowl.*) Please, Dr. Lockwood ——

LOCKWOOD. (*To Helen.*) Yes. "It is painful to be an exception—but it's also glorious."

WAGNER. (*Coming down steps* L.) What?

LOCKWOOD. (*To Wagner who has stopped below steps.*) That's a quotation—Alfred DeMusset. A Frenchman. (*He turns back to Helen and takes an olive from her bowl.*)

MYRA. The *French* have such a French way of looking at things. Degenerate people. I've washed my hands of them. (*Helen slowly crosses to* D. L. *chair. Doug has finished his highball. He moves up to bar.*)

McHENRY. We were in Paris this winter.

MYRA. Cold, dirty and wherever you go they rob you blind.

UNDERHILL. (*Back of sofa.*) Understand everyone over there has his hand out.

MYRA. The hotel maids even stole my face cream.

McHENRY. Now, Myra, I told you what happened to the face cream —— (*Rises, crosses* R. *to bar. Gives Doug his empty glass.*)

MYRA. And my toothbrush.

DOUG. (*Holding up 2 empty glasses, his own and McHenry's.*) Would anyone like a refill?

MYRA. I despise the French people. Dirty necks, dirty minds, every last one of them. (*Doug picks up empty ice bucket from bar and exits* D. R.)

LOCKWOOD. (*Crosses* D. R.) Come, Mrs. McHenry, they have the Louvre as well as French postcards. (*Pops olive in his mouth —stands below* D. R. *armchair. Helen sits in* D. L. *chair and lights a cigarette.*)

MYRA. You'd think those people would have sense enough to be grateful when Americans spend money over there.

McHENRY. (*Crosses* L. *below sofa to* R. *of round table.*) Now,

Myra, tourists have different experiences. Some good and some bad.

MYRA. And what did you do about it? You just stood there and let them cheat me. (*McHenry sits* R. *of round table.*) Those foreigners —— Believe me I was glad to get home and see the dear old Statue of Liberty.

HELEN. (*Seated* D. L.) Beautiful, isn't she? A gift to us from France. (*Lockwood sits* D. S. *arm of* D. R. *chair. Doug re-enters* D. R. *with full ice bucket. Stands to* R. *of end table* R. *of sofa.*)

MYRA. (*To Lockwood.*) Well, as far as I'm concerned they can drop the bomb on all of Europe any time they like. *I'd* never miss it.

HELEN. Why, Mrs. McHenry, you can't mean that.

MYRA. (*Turning on Helen.*) That's exactly what I do mean. (*Helen rises. Crosses up to console table* L. *Myra turns to others in the room.*) I know it isn't a nice thing to say, but ——

HELEN. (*Crosses in to Myra's* R.) I agree with you, Mrs. McHenry, I agree with you. That wasn't a nice thing to say at all. In fact I think it was a revolting thing to say. (*Crosses down* L. *Puts out her cigarette on* D. L. *end table. Myra rises. A horrified silence from all.*)

DOUG. Myra—what Helen means to say—I think ——

MYRA. I know what your wife means, Doug.

WAGNER. (*Crosses between round table and sofa to down* C.— *trying to fix things.*) I'm sure that basically Helen and Myra—I mean that fundamentally Helen wouldn't —— The point is that Myra —— (*He gives up. Crosses below Myra to over* L. *by railing.*) It *must* be time to go to dinner ——

CHUCK. (*Crosses up to* U. C. *table—gets Marge's bag and gloves. Marge crosses down* C.) Mustn't keep those sirloin steaks waiting ——

UNDERHILL. (*Behind sofa.*) That's right, folks, let's put on the old feed-bag —— (*Myra motions McHenry to get her fur piece. Doug puts ice bucket on end table* R. *of sofa.*)

CHUCK. (*Crosses down* C. *to Marge.*) Marge calls it the chuck-wagon—joke on my name.

MARGE. One of our little *family* jokes. (*Crosses* L. *to below round table. By this time they are all on their feet.*)

MYRA. (*Putting on fur.*) I'm afraid we won't be able to stay for

dinner —— (*Chuck takes a step* D. S. *and turns up to Doug who crosses above him.*)
DOUG. (*Crosses below sofa to Myra.*) Not stay for *dinner*?
MYRA. No, I have an absolutely splitting headache ——
DOUG. (*Very alarmed.*) Couldn't we get you something for it?
WAGNER. Couldn't Myra lie down in your room for a few minutes ——
MYRA. A few minutes? My headaches last for hours. (*Crosses* L. *and up steps to door platform.*)
DOUG. But, Spencer—do you have to go?
McHENRY. (*Reluctantly. He's been through this before. Crosses* L. *and up on door platform.*) When Myra gets one of her headaches we *always* go.
WAGNER. But—Spencer, isn't there anything we can do?
McHENRY. (*On platform. Myra* U. S. *of him.*) Now don't you worry about it. I'll take Myra back to the boat and get her to bed.
MYRA. (*Sweetly.*) Good night . . . (*Glares at Helen. Sharply:*) everyone! (*Snatches her purse out of McHenry's hand and goes out* U. L.)
McHENRY. (*Nodding amiably.*) Good night. Good night. (*Exits* U. L.)
DOUG. (*Crosses up* C. *and over to* U. L. *doors.*) Wait a minute, Spencer. I'll drive you back ——
McHENRY. (*Offstage.*) We can take a taxi.
DOUG. No, no, I insist —— (*As Doug closes the doors he gives Helen a look. A silence. Everyone turns on Helen, who is* D. L.)
WAGNER. (*Attacks Helen.*) Two years of hard work. Two million dollars down the drain! (*Between his teeth.*) What did you think you were doing?
HELEN. If Mrs. McHenry thinks anything—I'm supposed to think so twice as much, aren't I?
AMY. (*Crosses towards her but a look from Wagner stops her and she sinks in chair* R. *of round table.*) But, honey, I —— Oh, honey ——
UNDERHILL. (*Behind sofa—turns* U. S.) My God!
HELEN. The bomb on all of Europe. She said that wasn't a very nice thing to say and I agreed with her—just as I was told to do.
LOCKWOOD. (*Standing below* D. R. *chair.*) Mrs. McHenry outdoes Caesar. He only wanted to divide Gaul into three parts. (*Telephone rings—nobody moves to answer it.*)

CHUCK. (*Through ring.*) Dr. Lockwood, this is no time for joking. (*Sits on sofa. Telephone rings again. Helen rushes below sofa to answer it.*)

HELEN. (*Moves during conversation to below* R. *corner of sofa.*) Hello. . . . Long distance? . . . Yes, this is Mrs. Sayre. . . . Who? Oh, yes. . . . He won't be back till the end of the week? But he's got to get back. He's got to. (*The others are listening but it's too cryptic for them.*) He's where? . . . Where did you say he is? (*Her voice goes dead.*) Oh. Thank you—thank you very much. (*Her voice trails off. She hangs up numbly.*)

LOCKWOOD. (*Moves to behind and a bit above* D. R. *chair.*) Where is he?

HELEN. (*Handing Lockwood the phone.*) I wish I were with him —he's in Saudi Arabia!

MEDIUM CURTAIN

END OF ACT II

ACT III

About an hour later.

When the Curtain goes up, Helen is standing in the C. *of the windows* U. S. *smoking a cigarette. She is both angry and close to tears. She slams her hand against the window frame and then moves disconsolately into the room. The flowers in the vase on the round table catch her eye. She goes to behind the table, puts her cigarette out in an ash-tray and gathers the flowers up in one hand, lifts them up and stuffs them back in the vase upside down—blossoms in the water, leafy stems sticking up. Moving around the* L. *end of the table she makes a wide circle purposely avoiding Myra's chair and goes slowly over to below the* R. *end of the sofa. She places her hand on the Turbojet model which is still on the end table* R. *of the sofa and stands thinking for a moment. She then sinks into the* R. *end of the sofa with a sigh. The door* U. L. *opens and Amy enters. She leaves the door open. Helen pays no attention to her. Amy leaves handbag and gloves on round table.*

AMY. (*All warm sympathy, crosses to sofa, sits* C.) Honey, don't feel that way.—A dame wants to toss bombs around like they were firecrackers and you tell her you don't like it. Well, why shouldn't you? (*No response from Helen. Amy rises and moves towards* C.) So Myra McHenry says something revolting and you tell her it's revolting. (*The difference strikes her and she stops* C.) My God! (*She sinks into the chair* R. *of round table. Still no response from Helen. Amy's eye lights on the bouquet which Helen has turned upside down. She reads the attached gift card:*) "Peerless Gear and Sprocket Corporation." (*She sniffs at the scrawny stems.*) Cheap skates! (*Still seated she turns back to Helen.*) Honey, look at it this way. It's a clash of personalities. (*She rises.*) It's not the end of the world. (*Still no answer from Helen.*) So Mrs. Norse Wagner and Mrs. McHenry Motors slug it out! (*With a stricken gesture.*) I guess it's damn near the end of the world! (*Crosses to front of sofa, sits. Helen finally looks at her.*)

ACT III

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HELEN. Why?
AMY. I tried to tell you—when you love a man, you love his corporation, when you marry a man, you marry his corporation ——
HELEN. (*Thoughtfully.*) It's a package deal. (*A pause.*) Amy, who am I?
AMY. (*Alarmed.*) What'd you say?
HELEN. Who am I?
AMY. Now, Sweetie, you've got to get a grip on yourself. I'm going to give you a Miltown. (*Crosses over* L. *to get bag on round table.*) Everything will still be God-awful but you won't care. (*She digs in her handbag. Gets out small pill box and removes one.*)
HELEN. (*Peering at her badge.*) It says here that I'm Mrs. Douglas Sayre.
AMY. You've been under a lot of strain. Marriage is a big adjustment. (*Pill out of box.*)
HELEN. It says I'm *Mrs. Douglas Sayre* but I *feel* like myself.
AMY. (*Humoring her.*) And you are yourself. Mrs. Douglas Sayre. It's the same thing. (*She crosses to pour a glass of water from the carafe on sofa table.*)
HELEN. Oh, Amy, what have I done to Doug? Did you see the way he looked at me when he left to drive them back to the boat!
AMY. Now, honey, you mustn't let yourself go to pieces. (*Crosses down around* L. *end to front of sofa; gives Helen pill.*) Here.
HELEN. You mean—it's not so bad?
AMY. (*Gives her glass of water—sits* C. *of sofa beside Helen.*) Honey, how could it be *worse*?
HELEN. Suppose there are two Dr. Lockwoods? Suppose one was an economist and the other was a professor of philosophy. Suppose I called the wrong one? *That's* how it could be worse.
AMY. (*With a laugh.*) Let's not suppose!
HELEN. We don't have to. I've done it. (*Turns away to face* R.)
AMY. You invited a professor of philosophy to talk to a convention like this! Ha! (*Rises—crosses* L. *as if to get pills—remembers and turns back. She snatches the Miltown and glass of water out of Helen's hand and swallows it herself—sits on sofa.*)
HELEN. I got mixed up because I read an article in the *Atlantic Monthly* by this Dr. Lockwood. He writes about businessmen too, from a different angle.

AMY. (*Places water glass on floor close to* L. *end of sofa.*) I'll bet.

HELEN. He said the corporation used to want men's sweat. Now it wants their souls.

AMY. (*Laughing.*) That's good.

HELEN. He said if a customer comes around after hours, let him go climb a tree.

AMY. (*More laughter.*) That's priceless. Oh, honey, we ought to let him go ahead and make that speech! (*Dr. Lockwood enters* U. L. *doors—leaves them open.*)

HELEN. Amy, he's —— (*She sees Lockwood and rises.*)

LOCKWOOD. Mrs. Sayre—I've got to talk to you. (*Crosses down steps* L. *to* C. *He stops. Uncertain of Amy.*)

AMY. Dr. Lockwood, I want your autograph. (*Lockwood, bewildered, looks at Helen.*)

HELEN. (*Crosses to* D. R. *armchair and sits.*) Amy thinks you ought to make the banquet speech.

LOCKWOOD. (*To Amy.*) Don't you think I'd be tarred and feathered?

AMY. (*A light in her eyes.*) Wouldn't it be worth it? (*Dr. Lockwood shudders.*)

LOCKWOOD. (*Crosses to Helen in* D. R. *armchair. To Helen:*) Morbid curiosity compels me to ask—how did it happen?

AMY. If only she'd read *Good Housekeeping* or the *Ladies' Home Journal.* (*Puts her feet up on sofa.*)

HELEN. If only it hadn't been Sunday. You see right after the Program Committee decided on Dr. Lockwood Doug had to rush for a plane to Detroit. Naturally, on a Sunday he couldn't ask his secretary—so I told him I'd call.

LOCKWOOD. (*Facing Helen.*) You certainly have disorganized the organization.

HELEN. At first I tried to tell Doug about you. Then I thought I'd better wait until I could get in touch with the other Dr. Lockwood ——

LOCKWOOD. (*To Amy. He steps up* R. *to* R. *of corner of sofa.*) I presume that when my identity is revealed there will be a general rise in blood pressure?

AMY. (*Delighted.*) So high you'll have to stand back to look at it. (*Underhill enters* U. L. *leaving doors open. He has been looking for Amy and he's irritated to see her relaxed on the couch with*

her feet up and a broad smile on her face. He crosses down steps L. *to* C.)

UNDERHILL. Amy—for crying out loud, where have you been?

AMY. What's it to you? (*Howls with laughter as she lies prone on her stomach on the sofa—head to* S. R. *end—kicking her feet up and down.*)

UNDERHILL. (*To Amy.*) What are you doing sitting around here?

AMY. Taking the weight off my feet. (*Howls with laughter.*)

UNDERHILL. You get back to the ballroom on the double. You promised the first dance to Harvey O'Connor Consolidated Structural Iron.

AMY. And that's just how he dances. (*Amy gets to her feet reluctantly. Crosses below him to get bag on round table and up* C. *to door platform.*)

UNDERHILL. He's been looking all over. If you don't turn up he's liable to get mad.

AMY. (*On her way to the door, up* L.) Tell him to go climb a tree.

UNDERHILL. (*Following her.*) What the hell's the matter with you? (*Amy is at door but turns for her next line, to railing.*)

AMY. (*To Helen.*) Those pills really work, don't they? (*Slams Underhill on chest with her bag.*) Come on, Arthur. Let's go! (*Amy and Underhill exit* U. L. *leaving doors open.*)

LOCKWOOD. (*Sits* R. *end of sofa.*) You knew I wasn't their man from the beginning, didn't you? (*Helen nods.*) Why didn't you tell me?

HELEN. You were so pleased and so excited about giving your speech—and then I thought how wonderful it would be if you could—by then I couldn't get a word in edgewise.

LOCKWOOD. At your party a while ago perhaps I got too many words in edgewise.

HELEN. (*Rises. Crosses below sofa to* C.) Oh, that party—— Did you see Doug's face when I said he likes to play with the children next door?

LOCKWOOD. There are no children?

HELEN. There's no next door. (*Crosses up* C. *between round table and sofa.*) Nothing but acres of land. Do you think I'll ever learn this work and play together routine?

LOCKWOOD. In Calcutta I saw a man who learned to lie on spikes.

HELEN. The other wives seem to enjoy this jumping through hoops. (*Crosses down* L. *to front of round table.*) There must be a trick to it.

LOCKWOOD. You crouch low and pull your head down between your shoulder blades.

HELEN. (*She sits chair* L. *of round table.*) Maybe that's what I have to do.

LOCKWOOD. Passion and spirit in the ashcan? You'll be made of wires and gears and shiny push-buttons. You push button number one and—the lips draw back in a radiant and automatic smile. Push button number two—the eyes grow moist at the sound of the Company Anthem. Button number three—Bang! There goes all jarring and original thought. The pre-fabricated (*Rises. Crosses* L.) mind—the most tempting package on (*Sits on* L. *arm of sofa.*) the market! Let the buyer beware. Follow the crowd now and you will be safe—you will owe no one an apology—except yourself. (*He pauses—rises—a step* D. S.) When you faced that McHenry woman a while ago I saw banners flying. Is the victory to be called off? Why not whip up the band and have a little martial music?

HELEN. (*Still in chair* L. *of table.*) My husband is a corporation executive. I can't go on making things difficult for him.

LOCKWOOD. Then proceed to the next step. Make things impossible for him.

HELEN. (*Rises—crosses a step* D. S. *to below round table.*) Dr. Lockwood!!

LOCKWOOD. (*Crosses to her.*) Refuse to put up with the Other Woman.

HELEN. (*Turns to him.*) You mean the Norse Wagner Company?

LOCKWOOD. (*Crosses to her.*) My dear girl, if you love him, bite, scratch and pull her hair. (*Doug enters. Lockwood crosses straight up* C. *and then onto door platform.*)

DOUG. (*On platform.*) I'm sorry, Dr. Lockwood—our evening seems rather to have fallen apart ——

LOCKWOOD. (*As he goes.*) I *like* apartness —— (*He starts to speak to Helen—stops—looks quickly at Doug then goes out, closing the door behind him.*)

DOUG. (*Sour. Crosses down steps* L. *Crosses to below* C. *of sofa and sits.*) Something very peculiar about that guy.

HELEN. (*Crosses to* L. *end of sofa.*) So you've noticed? (*She takes a deep breath.*) I've made a terrible mistake. I can't tell you how sorry I am —— (*Kneels at* L. *end of sofa—picks up water glass from floor.*)

DOUG. (*Coldly.*) Let's just skip the sackcloth and ashes act, if you don't mind. She's McHenry's wife. I do business with McHenry. There are certain things worth keeping your mouth closed for ——

HELEN. (*Stands up.*) *Which* things?

DOUG. (*Leans forward.*) I'm going to try to see him tomorrow morning. He's an approachable guy —— (*A pause.*) Not a word in the car. He was civil enough, but nothing to smooth the thing over —— (*A pause. Helen crosses over* L. *to front of round table. Leave glass—gets a cigarette and box of matches.*) McHenry needs us as much as we need him. Dyke-Wilcox can't deliver for him the way we can. (*A pause.*) I couldn't believe my ears. (*A pause and a sigh—leans back.*) Why do some men marry some of the women they marry?

HELEN. (*She looks over to him. She's hurt.*) I don't blame you for wondering ——

DOUG. I've been wondering all evening ——

HELEN. It was love—(*Anxiously.*) wasn't it?

DOUG. In my wildest flight of imagination, I don't think it was love —— (*He leans over and ties his shoe lace.*)

HELEN. You think it was—sex?

DOUG. Sex! (*An incredulous laugh.*) Don't be silly!

HELEN. Well, it could have been—looks.

DOUG. What good is a face if every time it opens its mouth, he shudders?

HELEN. (*She sits in chair* L. *of round table.*) People do marry for money, but ——

DOUG. Yup. That's the only answer that makes any sense ——

HELEN. (*Devastated.*) Doug! You can't mean that! (*Completely misunderstanding him.*)

DOUG. When her old man died, Spencer got control of the company. He merged it with ——

HELEN. (*Sudden realization.*) Spencer McHenry? You're talking about Myra?

DOUG. Who'd you think I was talking about? (*Helen shrugs her shoulders—lifts her arms. Tenderly. Rises. Crosses to her below round table. Gets her up.*) Oh—we've had a bad couple of hours.

Come on, let's forget it. There *is* a bright side to it ——

HELEN. There is?

DOUG. An unexpected bonus. A nice long evening to ourselves! What would you like to do?

HELEN. I've *got* to talk to you ——

DOUG. Let's go for a moonlight swim. (*Draws her toward* C. *between round table and sofa.*)

HELEN. No. Not now. (*She tries to hold back.*)

DOUG. Shall we go for a walk along the beach?

HELEN. I can't—in these shoes.

DOUG. (*Still drawing her up* C.) To hell with the shoes! Let's get a blanket and lie in the sand ——

HELEN. (*Breaks away from him.*) Let's just sit here for a while and talk ——

DOUG. I'll make violent love to you under the stars!

HELEN. I feel like talking.

DOUG. (*Irritably.*) And I'm fed up with talking —— (*Sits* L. *end of sofa. A silence.*) What do you want to talk about? (*Another silence.*)

HELEN. (C. *Innocently thrusting the cigarette at him which she still has in her hand.*) How about a cigarette? (*He takes it. She lights it for him.*)

DOUG. Thank you, darling.

HELEN. (*She crosses behind sofa to the bar and pours a snifter of brandy which she hands to him over back of sofa.*) Here. Brandy.

DOUG. Oh, thanks. (*Drinks as he looks and admires her.*)

HELEN. (*Crosses behind sofa to down* R. *Indicates the armchair* D. R.) Why don't you sit there in that chair?

DOUG. No, darling, I'm fine.

HELEN. Oh, come on. It's much more relaxing. (*She pounds chair seat as he did in Act II. Then he crosses and sits in it.*) Now, don't you feel all nice and unwound?

DOUG. Yeah, I am kind of tired. (*She puts his feet on bassock.*)

HELEN. Eases those tired bones, doesn't it—old boy? (*In a lower voice.*) Comfortable, fella? (*Moves in front of him. A pause—then Doug recognizes the playback. Opens his eyes. Looks at her suspiciously.*)

DOUG. (*Jerks his feet off bassock to floor.*) What the hell do you think you're doing? (*Helen is startled at his sudden movement.*)

HELEN. (R. C. *With utmost sincerity.*) Getting you ready to share my troubles ——

DOUG. Let's just forget about the McHenrys for a while.

HELEN. Oh, Doug—it's not the McHenrys —— (*He relaxes again. A pause. She moves the hassock a little* U. S. *and sits on it at his feet.*) You know I suppose people named Smith and Jones are always getting mixed up with other people named Smith and Jones ——

DOUG. Uh-huh. (*Drinks his brandy.*)

HELEN. I knew a girl at college named Althea Johnson. A Dartmouth boy called her up and invited her to the Winter Carnival. When she got there it turned out he'd meant to invite a girl named Natalie Johnson ——

DOUG. (*Sleepily.*) Stupid damn fool ——

HELEN. But it turned out splendidly! They fell in love and got married—*on skis!* (*A black thought.*) Now they're divorced. (*Rises. Crosses* C. *A pause.*) Lockwood isn't a very common name, is it?

DOUG. Uh-uh.

HELEN. (*Turns to him. Takes stance as on a pitcher's mound. Wipes ground with one foot, then the other, as a pitcher would.*) Well, there's a Thomas G. Lockwood, an economist who writes for the *Wall Street Journal*, and there's a Jonas Lockwood, a professor of philosophy, who writes for the *Atlantic Monthly*. It would be easy to mix *them* up.

DOUG. Not so easy ——

HELEN. Well, hard as it is, (*Does a pitcher's "wind-up."*) I've done it! (*Pitches an imaginary ball toward him—remains in bent-over position watching the effect.*)

DOUG. (*Wide awake—sits up.*) What did you say?

HELEN. That's the Lockwood I called when you—(*She falters.*) told-me-to-call-Dr.-Lockwood ——

DOUG. (*Not believing his ears. Rises, crosses to her at* C.) The Dr. Lockwood who is here is Dr. Thomas Lockwood, the economist.

HELEN. Uhuh. (*Helen shakes her head.*)

DOUG. *Well, who the hell is it?*

HELEN. Jonas Lockwood, the philosopher! (*Doug is speechless. His mouth drops open. He stares at Helen.*)

DOUG. There goes the ball game. (*Telephone rings. He goes*

to answer it, leaves brandy snifter on bar. The phone is now on the bar. Helen stands over L.) Hello—yes, Chuck? (*Angrily.*) Well, of course it's off. I took them back to the boat, didn't I? . . . What about the Flamingo Club? . . . Why are you bothering me with that? Do you have to call a Committee Meeting every time you turn around? . . . What the hell do I care what you do with it? . . . Sure, take the Barringers . . . take the Queen of England. (*He slams down the phone.*) *Eunuch!*

HELEN. (*Crosses to* C.) What'd you say?

DOUG. (*Crosses to front of sofa.*) Half a man. That's what everybody's getting to be around here —— (*Then briskly.*) All right now. Got to get this speaker mess straightened out. Got to do something about it —— Let's see. First of all, cancel out this phony Lockwood ——

HELEN. He's not phony. He is who he is—he's just not who you think he is.

DOUG. Get the real Thomas Lockwood on the phone. (*Dives for the phone.*) If I can reach him tonight, he could —— (*Gets to phone—lifts it up to make a call.*)

HELEN. (*Still* C.) I called him, he's not in New York ——

DOUG. (*Not hearing her.*) He could fly down here tomorrow and ——

HELEN. He's in *Saudi-Arabia!*

DOUG. Naturally! Where else would he be? (*Stunned, bangs down the receiver.*) *You* called him? How long have you known about this? (*Crosses to Helen* D. C. ~~*Chuck and Marge open the doors and burst in* U. L., *stop short at rail, when they see the argument and turn and go quickly out, closing the doors.*~~)

HELEN. Since right away—when he got here.

DOUG. (*Shouting.*) Why the hell didn't you say something about it?

HELEN. (C.) I was scared ——

DOUG. (C. *Shouting.*) What do you mean *scared?* Scared of *what?*

HELEN. Maybe he could get you a substitute.

DOUG. A *Philosopher?* Who the hell can he get? *Aristotle?* (~~*Crosses below sofa to over* R., *kicks ottoman as he passes it. Chuck and Marge knock and enter and come to rail. Chuck is flushed and pouting. Marge is wide-eyed*—U. S. *of Chuck. Helen crosses up* C., *listens.*~~)

CHUCK. Doug—just now on the telephone ——
DOUG. (*Above* D. R. *chair.*) Yeah, what about it?
CHUCK. I just dropped an idea down the well to see if it splashed. After all, our date with the McHenrys is off.
DOUG. Obviously.
CHUCK. And a night at the Flamingo Club costs our Company a lot of money ——
DOUG. I look at your expense accounts. (*Crosses to below round table.*) You usually don't worry so much about spending the Company's money ——
CHUCK. (*To Doug.*) Just because I want to make the best possible use out of a high-priced evening you refuse to work together with me on ——
DOUG. I'm damn sick of *working together* on every pint-sized decision. What's so almighty holy about *working together?* It's getting the work done that counts.
CHUCK. Yes, but —— (*Helen sits on* L. *arm of sofa.*)
DOUG. (*Crosses* R. *below sofa. Puts cigarette out on end table* R. *of sofa.*) Rub that on the cat and see if she licks it off.
MARGE. (*Timidly.*) Come on, Chuck, maybe we'd better go.
CHUCK. I don't like being jumped on just because ——
DOUG. If you don't like it, find someone else to work for.
MARGE. (*Aghast.*) Chuck! Come on! (*She tugs at his sleeve and they move towards the door, suddenly Chuck stops and turns towards Doug.*)
CHUCK. (*Aggrieved.*) Doug . . . I happen to believe in cooperation ——
DOUG. Cooperation about *what?*
CHUCK. (*Stymied for an instant.*) Just—cooperation. (*Rigid with injured dignity he marches from the room.*)
MARGE. (*Desperate.*) Oh, Mrs. Sayre, I've just been dying to ask you—where on earth did you get that perfectly beautiful gown?
HELEN. I cooperated with Bonwit Teller. (*Marge hurries off—leaves doors open.*) Is that how they taught you to handle your assistant in Management School?
DOUG. I'm fed up with handling people.
HELEN. (*Brightly.*) One for our side!
DOUG. (*Irritably.*) What?

HELEN. It's refreshing. To hear you say what you *feel* for a change!

DOUG. (*Sits* C. *of sofa.*) Now look here, are you *insinuating* ——

HELEN. Even if it's only to a poor little underling who's worried about his job.

DOUG. You're just dying to pick a fight, aren't you?

HELEN. It's different with a customer, isn't it? A bitch is not a bitch if she's married to a customer!

DOUG. (*Leaning back.*) Okay, if you want a fight! That's pluperfect okay with me!

HELEN. Opinions are sacred if they're the opinions of a customer! Anything goes—if it means good business!

DOUG. (*Shouting.*) Well, what's wrong with *good business?*

HELEN. (*With a grand gesture. Rises to* C.) It buys us what we want, doesn't it?

DOUG. (*Rises.*) Do you have any complaints about this room? Or our house? Or our cars? Or that little thing around your wrist, for example?

HELEN. I adore them!

DOUG. Or are you nursing some sentimental girlish dream about a cold-water flat for two, laundry over the bath-tub, orange-crates for furniture—(*Crosses* R. *to bar.*) tuna-fish and noodles —— (*Picks up brandy snifter.*)

HELEN. I don't mind noodles ——

DOUG. (*Puts brandy snifter down on bar, crosses below sofa down to her* C.) Don't tell me I ought to feel guilty because I'm successful!

HELEN. I didn't.

DOUG. Don't tell me a man has to be a drone, a cipher, a mediocrity in order to live with himself.

HELEN. I won't.

DOUG. Integrity! I've got plenty of integrity! Just don't mention the word to me! (*Helen claps her hand over her mouth.*) So *what's wrong* with good business?

HELEN. (*With mock innocence, uncovers her mouth.*) What is?

DOUG. Sure, there are times when—you have to control yourself —I'll buy you a dart board. You can call it Myra McHenry and throw darts at it. I'll buy you a straw dummy and you can stick pins in it! Just don't get into any debates when I'm in a deal!

(*Crosses* L.) You're perfectly free to *think* what you like. (*Exits* D. L., *slamming door behind him.*)

HELEN. (*Shouting after him.*) Norse-Wagner doesn't insist on brain-washing *yet!*

DOUG. (*Enters with a growl. Crosses to her* C.) Oh—now damn it! That's an *outrageous* remark!

HELEN. (D. C.) The Company insists on everything else—how to act, how to dress, what to say, when to smile, when to eat, when to drink, when to *make love* ——

DOUG. (D. C. *to her* L.) You're off your rocker! Didn't I *just*—ten minutes ago, didn't I ——

HELEN. (*Tops him.*) A *bonus,* you called it! *An evening off from entertaining the customers!*

DOUG. Of all the *devious* female ways of reasoning ——

HELEN. Attack me because I'm female! Is that all you can think of when you're trapped in an argument?

DOUG. (*Enraged.*) *Trapped?* You just don't know who you're tangling with, sister ——

HELEN. Tough guy! You're ready to punch anyone who makes a pass at my body! What about my mind? It's open season on my mind, isn't it?

DOUG. You can have all the damn convictions you want—only —shut up about them. (*Crosses* D. L.)

HELEN. (C.) You're such a true-blue believer in free enterprise. When I speak up to a bigot—that's *my* free enterprise!

DOUG. (*Crosses back to her* C.) All I asked you to use was a little horse sense! A little *plain common horse sense!*

HELEN. (*Shouting at him.*) Then why didn't you marry a *horse?* (*Crosses up* C. *to window. Doug crosses below sofa to extreme* R. *and then up behind sofa and over to Helen who is up* C. *Wagner bursts into the room* U. L.—*the doors are open and he leaves them open. His blood pressure is way up there.*)

WAGNER. (*On platform.*) I've just heard about Lockwood! It's *unbelievable! Disgraceful!*

DOUG. (*Crossing to Helen. Ignoring Wagner.*) Helen, look, let's be sensible about this. I know you've been under a strain ——

HELEN. Don't you try to *handle* me! (*Getting away and crosses down between round table and sofa to extreme down* L.)

WAGNER. (*Crosses to* U. C. *on platform.*) It's the wrong Lockwood! It's an impostor!

DOUG. (*Still ignoring him and following Helen.*) All I ask is just be careful what you say —— (*Crosses down between sofa and round table to* D. C.)

HELEN. (*Over* L.) I'll say what I please! That's my *right*—according to the gospel of the Founding Fathers!

WAGNER. (*Crosses down between sofa and round table to below round table.*) This Lockwood publishes *attacks* on businessmen —— (*Doug crosses away to* D. R.)

HELEN. (*Ignoring Wagner. Crosses towards Doug.*) And it's my right not to worship the ideas of Myra McHenry!

WAGNER. (*Crosses down to* D. L. C. *then up to below round table again.*) Two years of hard work down the drain! Two million dollars!

DOUG. (*Ignoring Wagner, to Helen. Crosses to Helen* L. C.) What difference does it make what Myra thinks? Who cares?

HELEN. It makes a difference to *me*. *I* care!

WAGNER. (*Steps down to between them.*) *She* got this Lockwood down here! The last straw!

DOUG. (*Ignoring him.*) You can't change Myra. It doesn't matter to her ——

HELEN. (*Pushes Wagner out of her way.*) It matters to *me*. It concerns what *I* think of *myself!*

WAGNER. (*Still between them.*) Will you listen to me! She's turned everything upside down —— (*Doug crosses* R. *to ottoman.*)

HELEN. (*Shouting at Doug's back as he moves* R.) Well, I believe in *decency*. And I'm not going to kick it in the teeth for a *big deal!*

WAGNER. (*Follows Doug to* R. C.) My instincts! I spotted her right away! I warned you!

HELEN. (L. C. *Turns her back to them triumphantly. To Doug:*) Big Brother is speaking to you!

WAGNER. (*To Helen. Crosses to her.*) You—you can't make a move without causing trouble ——

HELEN. (*To Wagner, turning on him.*) Mr. Wagner, I will bridge, I will bowl, I will be on the ball. I will go to luncheons and cocktail parties and even nurse drunks ——

WAGNER. (C.) I pride myself! My instincts ——

HELEN. (L. C.) But I will not consider my heart the property of the Norse Wagner Company! I will not turn over my mind for a piece of sales promotion ——

WAGNER. I told Doug you'd never make the right sort of wife ——

HELEN. The right sort of Norse Wagner wife—is that what you mean? (*A step backwards. She takes a deep breath.*) Then fire me! Go ahead *fire* me!

WAGNER. I wish I could!

HELEN. (*Throws badge up* L.) Kick me out! Court martial me! (*Throws corsage up* L.) Bust me back to a private citizen! Take back your uniform —— (*With her back to audience she bends over and lifts front of dress as if to tear it off.*)

DOUG. (*Is over* R. *Wagner turns his back and covers his eyes.*) Hold it—hold it! (*Doug crosses* U. *by bar. She drops the dress to its normal. She crosses behind Wagner to front of sofa, touching Wagner's shoulder with finger as she speaks.*)

HELEN. I resign! I'm through! I'm finished! I hereby sever all connections with the Norse Wagner Company! (*To Doug.*) From now on I'll go to bed with a book—but at least *I'll* choose which book I go to bed with! (*Crosses front of sofa, gets on the floor and starts squirming to reach under it for books.*)

DOUG. (*Step* D. *to* R. *corner of sofa. Appalled.*) Helen! *What are you doing?* (*At this point McHenry walks in through open doors* U. L.)

McHENRY. Hello, everybody! (*Starts down steps* L.—*he doesn't see Helen.*)

WAGNER. Spencer! (*Whirls and crosses to McHenry's* L.)

McHENRY. (*To Wagner over his* L. *shoulder as he crosses* C.—*Wagner follows him.*) I've been looking for you in the ballroom. Gave Myra a sleeping pill, hi-balled it over here and I can't find anybody. (*Sees Helen on the floor and crosses to her.*) Hello, Beautiful. What are we playing?

HELEN. (*Squirming on the floor.*) I'm trying to get some books ——

McHENRY. How'd they get way under there?

HELEN. I was told to keep them hidden.

DOUG. Who the hell told you that?

McHENRY. (*Crosses below to* R. *of her. Getting down on the floor to help her.*) Are they—uh—spicy books? (*Doug gets matches and cigarette from sofa table. Crosses up and out on terrace. Lights cigarette.*)

HELEN. (*Showing him.*) If I have to hide them here, I'd have to bury them in Westminster.

McHENRY. Under the couch? That's rather unusual —— Oh, well, you're an unusual young woman.

HELEN. (*Rising.*) Don't hold it against the Norse Wagner Company. (*Takes four books to console table* L. *and McHenry rises holding other four books.*)

McHENRY. On the contrary ——

HELEN. (*At console table.*) Doug's tried to change me.

McHENRY. *Change* you? Why?

HELEN. Because when you marry a man you marry his corporation. If I'd known that I wouldn't have accepted *them.* (*A gesture that includes Wagner who is by round table and Doug who is on the terrace.*) I don't believe in polygamy. (*Crosses* R. *to get other 4 books from McHenry. She puts them on end table* R. *of sofa.*)

WAGNER. (*Below round table.*) Spencer, I can't tell you how deeply I deplore what happened before dinner —— (*McHenry crosses towards Wagner.*)

HELEN. I admit it, Mr. McHenry. That party was a flop.

McHENRY. (*Turning to Helen, crosses back to front of sofa.*) I was having a fine time—damn shame Myra got into such a dither and cut it short.

WAGNER. We all want to apologize to you. (*Doug—still on terrace—turns down stage.*)

McHENRY. Forget it. Myra dished it out. She deserved to have it dished right back to her.

HELEN. Oh—she did!

McHENRY. (*Doug steps into room on platform* U. R. C. *behind sofa.*) Anyway it was all my fault.

HELEN. (*Crosses in to McHenry below* R. *end of sofa.*) Your fault?

McHENRY. I made a fuss over you. Myra doesn't like it when I make a fuss over other women. She gets mad—and when Myra gets mad she'll say *anything.* Anyway I like your spunk.

HELEN. (*Sits sofa.*) Well ——

McHENRY. Dates me, doesn't it? I guess spunk is old fashioned these days. (*McHenry sits beside her on sofa.*) People didn't use to go around yapping "me too" like a bunch of sheep.

HELEN. (*Turning to Doug.*) Doug! That's what I was —— (*She stops herself from going on.*)

McHENRY. Mrs. Sayre, if Myra gave you some bad moments, I offer you my apologies, with sincere admiration. (*She turns front with a smile.*) What more can I say? (*Her eye lights on the turbojet model on the end table* R. *of sofa.*)

HELEN. (*Suddenly pointing to the model.*) Could you say that's the best turbojet control ever made? (*Wagner moves nervously* D. L.)

McHENRY. (*A bit nonplussed.*) Well—so my engineers tell me ——

HELEN. If you put it on the McHenry jet engines you'll get Norse Wagner out of an awful hole. (*Wagner can't bear it. He has a fit of coughing and sinks into* D. L. *chair. Doug gets back out on terrace* U. C.) But, Mr. Wagner, you said everything depends on putting over this deal.

WAGNER. *Helen!*

HELEN. (*To McHenry.*) But you see the trouble is that we understand Dyke-Wilcox has made a turbojet control too ——

McHENRY. Dyke-Wilcox has made a very good one.

HELEN. Well, then you're like a girl with two men in love with her. It's not fair to keep both of them on the string.

McHENRY. My dear, deals aren't made like this.

HELEN. I know ——

McHENRY. I didn't need that party, John—I was going to tell Doug tomorrow anyway. (*Rises, starts to cross to Wagner* D. L.) When I get back to my office next week, I'll be ready to start talking about a deal with Norse Wagner. (*Doug steps back into room on platform* U. C.)

WAGNER. Spencer, that's great news—splendid! (*Rises, meets McHenry below round table.*)

McHENRY. We'll do some preliminary talking—blueprint how we want to set the thing up.

WAGNER. (*Arm on McHenry's shoulder.*) Fine.

McHENRY. Lots of kinks to iron out. We'll get together with our lawyers. I'll want Doug on hand for a couple of weeks. And bring this little lady along with you. (*Doug crosses down behind sofa table.*)

WAGNER. (*Beaming.*) Helen? *Of course* he'll bring Helen!

McHENRY. Next Monday then? (*Shakes hands with Wagner.*)

DOUG. I'm afraid not —— (*Puts cigarette out on table behind sofa.*)

McHENRY. Tied up? Want to make it Tuesday?
DOUG. (*Crosses down between sofa and round table to* R. *of McHenry.*) Well, I won't be able to make it at all. (*To Wagner.*) But you and Chuck can manage. He's worked along with me. He's been briefed. (*Helen rises—a step to* R.)
WAGNER. But it's your project!
DOUG. Not after tonight. I'm resigning from the Norse Wagner Company.
WAGNER. *What's that?*
McHENRY. What's going on here?
DOUG. (*To Wagner.*) I'll see that you get a letter making it all formal and official.
WAGNER. Have you gone out of your mind?
McHENRY. I don't follow—when did this happen?
DOUG. A few minutes ago—when I saw my wife on the floor. (*Lockwood enters through open doors* U. L. *with suitcase which he puts on floor up at door. He is unnoticed by others. He remains at railing watching them.*)
McHENRY. Wait a minute, boy, we've got a deal on!
WAGNER. Are you crazy? You can't leave the company after all these years! Your life—your whole future's tied up in it. What about your pension, what about your group-insurance?
DOUG. (*Crosses to Helen* R. C., *puts his arm around her waist.*) Tonight at a party I saw my wife wearing a mask and making the remarks of an idiot. Well, damn it, I didn't marry an idiot.
WAGNER. (*Crosses to Doug* D. R. C.) Now for heaven's sake, Doug, we can call a little meeting—(*Helen smiles and crosses* R. *to above chair* D. R.) sit down and think this thing through together. I'm positive that Helen will be able to adjust to the way we do things.
DOUG. (*Front of* R. *end of sofa facing Wagner.*) The company that I work for will have to adjust to *our* way of doing things. I can sell a product if it's a good product, and that's all I'll contract to do. I'll stick to oiling the machinery and not the customers.
WAGNER. But, Doug, *the only way to operate is as a team.*
McHENRY. If Doug is out, count me out too. (*Crosses to* L. *near console table.*)
WAGNER. (*A look at McHenry, then back to Doug.*) And every team needs a man to call the signals —— *Doug, you're calling the signals.* I'll just coach from the sidelines.

DOUG. About the plant—about the shops—about the offices—I respect your experience, I welcome your advice. But stay out of my personal life, John.

LOCKWOOD. (*From railing* U. L.) May I congratulate you, sir, on your retirement?

WAGNER. (*Crosses between sofa and round table up to Lockwood. Turning on him in a fury.*) As for you, sir, we are down to earth businessmen with a job to do. We don't have time for *philosophy.*

McHENRY. (*Crosses up to foot of steps* L.) Philosophy?

HELEN. (*Over* R. *near bar.*) Yes, sir. This is Dr. Jonas Lockwood of Michigan State.

LOCKWOOD. Well, back to my own bailiwick —— (*To Helen.*) You've been a charming audience of one.

DOUG. (*Below sofa.*) By the way, Professor, what were you planning to speak on?

LOCKWOOD. The Other Woman. The third member of the Modern American Triangle. Selfish, scheming, seductive, with a bust measurement the size of a machine shop.

DOUG. That's a speech I'd like to hear. (*Sits* C. *of sofa.*)

LOCKWOOD. Whenever you're ready, Mr. Sayre, have your wife call me. (*Picks up suitcase.*) She's got my number. (*Exits* U. L. *with a wave at the group—leaves doors open.*)

McHENRY. (*Up* L. C.) Well, then, Doug, I can expect you in New York on Monday?

DOUG. No. I'll send Chuck. He and the lawyers can handle the preliminaries. I'll be back in two weeks.

WAGNER. (*A step to* L. *end of sofa.*) Where are you going?

DOUG. (*Looking at Helen.*) I have to consolidate a merger—Nassau and Montego Bay ——

WAGNER. What's going on down there?

DOUG. (*Laughs.*) No concern of the company's.

WAGNER. Very well, Doug, if you prefer formality to friendship, that's all right with me. (*Goes up on platform, leans on rail—stiffly.*) Helen . . .

HELEN. (*With dignity.*) Yes, John? (*Wagner is taken aback for an instant.*)

WAGNER. Did you get that table at the Flamingo Club?

HELEN. In Palm Beach? (*Crosses behind sofa table.*)

WAGNER. That's the one. Not too near the band?

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WAGNER. That's the one. Not too near the band?

HELEN. Not too near the band.

McHENRY. (*Crosses up steps* L., *puts arm on Wagner's shoulder.*) Well, if anyone wants us, that's where we'll be.

WAGNER. Aren't you two coming with us? (*They shake their heads.*)

DOUG. No, John. (*Wagner marches stiffly off. McHenry smiles at them, then turns to go.*)

HELEN. (*Sits in chair* R. *of round table.*) Oh, Mr. McHenry, whatever happened to that Little Man? Did he ever get his elephant sandwich?

McHENRY. (*Turns back.*) Afraid not. The chef refused to start another elephant for just one sandwich. (*He backs out of the room, closing the double doors on his last word.*)

DOUG. Well—anything *more* you want to talk about?

HELEN. Let me think.

DOUG. A few moments ago you said you wanted to stay in this evening and talk.

HELEN. That was a few moments ago.

DOUG. Well, then—what do you want to do now?

HELEN. What any good corporation wife would want to do now. (*Helen goes to the bedroom for a blanket. At the same moment, Doug goes to the kitchen* R. *for a bottle of brandy. Both re-enter at the same time and head for the terrace. Doug has slung the bottle over his shoulder. As Helen comes back from the bedroom trailing a blanket behind her, she stops* C. *and kicks off first one shoe and then the other, and follows Doug out.*)

FAST CURTAIN

PROPERTY PLOT

Set Dressing

Green rug covering entire floor, all platforms, steps and risers

L. *Wall*: Foliage in pot under console table, leaves around edge of soffit

Back Wall: Awning over terrace, palm tree behind S. L. side of terrace wall, foliage in planter boxes on terrace wall, brown netted curtain floor to ceiling 18" wide S. L. side of window, large planter in U. R. corner, salmon seat cushion on planter seat

R. *Wall*: Green floral design plaque on wall between door and pass-through, sculptured copper free form on wall over pass-through, green bowl with flowers and leaves on pass-through shelf

Foyer Entrance U. L.: White plastic bucket containing bark planter in corner, white marble console table against off stage wall, 2 Chinese bird prints over console table, 1 Chinese bird print over planter

Pantry S. R.: White, bamboo blinds covering window

Personal Properties

Helen: Sunglasses, beach bag, book, convention badge, large, white handkerchief

Doug: Convention badge, paper money, wrist watch, handkerchief

Chuck: Pocket notebook, convention badge, cigarettes, glasses, wrist watch

Underhill: Notebook and pencil, convention badge

Amy: Papers for notes on McHenrys, glasses, pill box, cigarettes, orchid corsage, convention badge, wrist watch

Marge: Orchid corsage, convention badge

Wagner: Pocket watch and chain, glasses, convention badge

Lockwood: Glasses

Myra: Orchid corsage

Act I—On Stage

Straight chair: D. L. (Act I marks)

Small round end table: Below D. L. chair. Cigarette dish with 10 cigarettes, ash tray with water and 2 boxes of matches

Console table: S. L. wall. 2 pencils, ash tray with water and 2 boxes of matches

Mirror: On wall over console table

Round table: L. of C. Ash tray with water and 2 boxes of matches

2 straight chairs: L. and R. of round table

Pink wrought iron chair: S. L. end of terrace

Sofa: R. of C. 3 throw pillows
End table: L. of sofa. Cigarette dish with 15 cigarettes, ash tray with water and 2 boxes of matches
Black plastic zipper envelope: Leaning against back of sofa, S. L. end
Sofa table: Behind C. of sofa (leave air space). Ash tray and 2 boxes of matches, gift basket of fruit with tag
Pre-set on floor behind sofa for fast changes: *Wall Street Journal*, cut flower box with tissue paper. Dish of peanuts, empty cigarette dish, stack of four glass ash trays. 5 corsage boxes. One contains Helen's corsage. Cigarette dish with 10 cigarettes and 2 boxes of matches, small round end table (top clear)
Desk: S. R. wall. White telephone with 15′ of cord, white note pad and 2 pencils, ash tray with water and 2 boxes of matches
On ledge of planter concealed behind desk for fast change: 3 company reports (one folded open), folding travelling clock
Desk chair: 2′ on stage of desk
Waste basket: D. S. of desk
Easy chair: D. R. (Act I marks)
Down stage shutter in pass-through closed

Act I—Off Stage

Off R.: Refrigerator door slam, small round tray (Helen), pitcher of fresh squeezed orange juice, 3 glasses. Tray of drink things (brought on in fast change), ice bucket with cubes and tongs, bottle of Chevas Regal, bottle of Bourbon, bottle of No-Cal gingerale, 6 glasses with ice cubes
Off L.: Luggage (Bellboy) (all with air line tags), tan woman's suitcase, matching woman's overnight case, brown leather attache case, miscellaneous company folders and reports, several small reports, one being the "Cost Analysis." Blue woman's hat case, 4 books, miscellaneous filler wrapped in tissue paper
Man's brown leather suitcase, 2 suits, bathing suit, camera in case, role of film in box, bottle of Vodka
Raincoat (Helen)
Handbag and pair of gloves (Helen)
Several telegrams and messages (Doug)
Small light weight typewriter (Chuck)
Large pile of catalogues, etc. (Chuck)
8 pencils (Chuck)
Convention banner rolled up (Chuck)
Turbojet control model with padding inside wooden box (Chuck)
Pocket bar guide with special typed lines (Wagner)
White leather bound convention program with pencil (Marge)
Dress box with clean sobering up room uniform and hat (Marge)

Act I—Scene 2

*Fast change—*L. *side:*

1st Man (on through D. L. *door*): Move suitcase D. L. close to D. L. chair. Move attache case from sofa to desk (clear through U. L. doors—leave them open)

2nd Man (on through D. L. door): Move pile of catalogues from round table to console table. Slide pencils, ash tray, matches, etc., to D. S. part of round table. Strike off film box and wrapping from round table (clear through D. L. door—close it but don't latch it)

*Fast change—*R. *side:*

1st Man (on through D. R. door): Travelling clock on pass-through shelf. 3 company reports on desk. Open attache case and place it on U. L. end of desk. Re-set phone and wire (clear through D. R. door and stop it from swinging)

2nd Man (on through D. R. door with tray of drink things): Set drink tray on S. R. end of sofa table, moving over ash tray and catalogues to L. end of table. Strike off small round tray, pitcher of juice, bottle of Vodka and 3 glasses (clear through U. L. doors—leave them open)

Act II—On Stage

Strike: From desk: Typewriter case, 3 folders, attache case. From sofa table: Drink tray, convention program, catalogues. From end table: Drink glasses. From round table: Bottom of model crate, dress box, pencils, black zipper envelope, telegrams and messages, move turbojet model to console table. From chair L. of round table: Suitcase, *Wall Street Journal.* From console table: Catalogues. From railing: Convention banner. From platform U. S.: Basket of fruit, top of Turbojet crate

Set: D. L. straight chair and end table to Act II marks. Pink wrought iron table and two chairs (one from terrace) in U. L. corner of platform. Re-set chairs beside round table on Act I marks. On small round end table behind sofa: Cigarette dish (with cigarettes) and 2 boxes of matches. On desk: 8 books and pair of bookends (C. books pulled out). On round table: Tray with 2 cups and saucers, glass of fruit juice, coffee carafe, bud vase with three rose buds, ash tray and 2 boxes of matches (stay on), L. place setting: Stem dish of canned fruit, napkin, knife, fork and spoon, covered plate with 2 pancakes. R. place setting: Plate of 2 slices of toast wrapped in napkin, knife on top of toast, dish of 3 pats of butter, napkin. Clean and re-set all ash trays. Check cigarettes in all cigarette dishes. Check water in ash tray on small round end table D. L.

Act II—Off Stage

Off R. (bar pre-set, see next page): Coffee cup and saucer (Helen). Ottoman: Leaning against portal (brought on in fast change). 2

dishes of canapes (HELEN). Bowl of black, pitless olives, small wooden platter of stuffed clams—clam shell with slice of banana and paprika

Off L.: Large tube of Tannic Acid Salve (CHUCK). 4 assorted yachting magazines (UNDERHILL). Open pack of cigarettes in fast change room (HELEN). Vase of good white carnations—one with tag (on in fast change). Large brown tray—empty (used for clearing props in fast change)

Off R.: Bar pre-set (brought on in the fast change): 5 hi-ball glasses, with ice, 2 Martini glasses (empty), tall Orleans Fizz glass with milk, bar towel, bottle of Haig & Haig Pinch Scotch, stacked ceramic tube, silver cocktail shaker with water and plastic ice cubes (sealed), soda syphon with good charge, Martini pitcher and stirring rod with water and ice, bottle of brandy (no cap), brandy snifter, bottle of gin, bottle of King's Ransom Scotch, bottle of Haig & Haig Pinch Scotch (second one), bottle of Chevas Regal Scotch (same as used in Act I), small round serving tray (same as used in Act I), 3 hi-ball glasses with ice, 2 Martini glasses with water, ice bucket with tongs and ice (same as used in Act I)

ACT II—SCENE 2

Fast change—L. *side*:

1ST MAN (on from between portal and return): Move Turbojet model from console table to end table. Clear all else from end table to 2ND MAN's tray except cigarette dish and 2 boxes of matches. Take cut flower box, cigarette dish, peanuts, stack of ash trays from behind sofa and place on round table. (Clear through U. L. doors and close them)

2ND MAN (on from between portal and return with empty tray and vase of carnations): Place vase on mark on round table. Clear all else from round table on tray except matches. (Clear through U. L. doors)

Fast change—R. *side*:

1ST MAN (on through D. R. door with bar): Move phone to pass-through shelf. Move desk out from wall. Put bar in position. Move end table from L. end of sofa to R. end. Pick nurse's hat up from floor and put it on desk. Take stack of 5 corsage boxes from behind sofa to end table. (Clear through D. R. door, help with desk, stop door swing)

2ND MAN (on through D. R. door—help on with bar): Put D. R. chair on Act II marks). Get ottoman from behind portal and place on marks. Get small round end table from behind sofa and place U. S. of D. R. chair. Take desk off. (Clear through D. R. door)

Act III—On Stage

Strike: From bar—3 hi-ball glasses. From D. R. end table—platter of clams. From sofa table—clam shell. From round table—all glasses. Put D. R. end table back behind sofa leaving cigarette dish and matches on top

Set: Change carnations in vase to ones for special business, leaving stem with the tag. Clean, water and re-set ash tray on round table. On sofa table—small round serving tray, pitcher of water half full with some ice, clean, empty hi-ball glass. Move ice bucket from end table to U. S. end of bar. Check brandy bottle and snifter for ready access. Put phone on bar. Move D. R. chair back to Act I marks. Fix books under sofa for easy access. Clean and re-set all ash trays. Check cigarettes in all cigarette dishes

Act III—Off Stage

Off R.: Tall bottle of brandy (Doug)

Off L.: Small leather man's suitcase (Lockwood). Blanket—inside fast change room (Helen)

Expendables: Cigarettes, matches, note pads, soda syphon charges, soap for washing dishes, peanuts, canned fruit, pancakes, bread for toast, butter, olives, bananas, paprika, fruit juice, gingerale, orange juice, caramel coloring for whisky, coffee, milk, ice

Laundry and Cleaning: Dish towels, napkins, blankets

Miscellaneous Supplies: Hot plate, electric toaster, pots and pans, buckets, pitchers for mixing whisky and orange juice, carpet sweeper

ELECTRIC PLOT

Special Note: While a copy of the switchboard hook-up and lighting is attached herewith, it is done so for our records and publication purposes.

Since productions seldom follow the original hook-up or operation, there is included an outline of the effects obtained.

General Note: At all times the playing areas are full bright comedy lighting, as light and as bright as can be.

Act I—Scene 1

11:00 A. M., bright sunny day. Sunlight pours in from off R. through windows across back wall

Act I—Scene 2

Later that afternoon, sunlight still pours in. Same effect as first scene

Act II—Scene 1

The next morning. Same as first act

Act II—Scene 2

That evening. It is not quite night yet and the backdrop still shows the effects of a beautiful sunset. The terrace area has lost the direct sunlight and has the warm glow of early evening. The chandelier, wall brackets and soffit are lit

Act III

Later that evening. The source lights are lit as in the last scene. It is now night outside and moonlight floods the terrace

WARDROBE PLOT

Act I—Scene 1

Bellboy: Light grey double breasted coat, navy blue trim, navy blue pants, light grey uniform stripe, white shirt, black tie, black shoes and socks.

Helen: Cerise dress, grey hi-heeled shoes. 1st Change: Light beige man's robe, several sizes too big. No shoes. 2nd Change: White bathing suit, white beach skirt with green lining (over shoulders), white beach shoes

Doug: Brown tweed jacket, solid brown pants, white shirt, striped tie, brown shoes and socks

Chuck: Light weight, tan business suit, white shirt, black tie, black shoes and socks

Underhill: Light weight, grey worsted suit, white shirt, blue tie, black shoes and socks

Amy: Beige, shantung dress, white straw hat, copper neck scarf, copper bag, gloves and shoes

Marge: French blue silk shirtwaist dress, shoes to match dress, white neck scarf, white hat, bag and gloves

Act I—Scene 2

Underhill: Same as Act I—Scene 1

Doug: Same as Act I—Scene 1

Chuck: Same as Act I—Scene 1

Wagner: Grey glen plaid suit, tattersall vest, white shirt, black and grey tie, black shoes and socks

Helen: Same white bathing suit and skirt as end of Act I—Scene 1, green blouse added, matches lining of skirt. 1st change: Pale pink

embroidered organza negligee, pale pink satin and lace slip under, same shoes. 2nd change (on stage): Clean white sobering up uniform with an "N" and "W" on the front and the words "Sobering Up Room" on the back, nurse's hat

MARGE: Same as Act I—Scene 1

LOCKWOOD: Blue and grey tweed jacket, grey flannel pants, light blue oxford shirt, dark blue bow tie, black shoes and socks

ACT II—SCENE 1

HELEN: Duplicate white sobering up room uniform and hat, large coffee stain down front of skirt, white tennis shoes

DOUG: Blue mohair suit pants, blue shirt, blue tie, black shoes and socks. 1st change: Add blue mohair suit coat

CHUCK: Brown and grey striped flannel sport jacket, same shirt, tie, shoes and socks, and pants as Act I

AMY: Yellow velveteen coat with print lining, flower print dress to match coat lining, yellow shoes and bag to match coat, flowered hat, white gloves

ACT II—SCENE 2

DOUG: White tux jacket, black tux pants and cummerbund pleated front shirt, black bow tie, black shoes and socks

HELEN: Full length evening dress, blue chiffon over green crepe sheath, shoes to match

AMY: Gold and white woven silk sheath, stole of same material, gold purse, white elbow length gloves, white satin shoes

UNDERHILL: White tux jacket, black tux pants, pleated shirt, blue bow tie and cummerbund, black shoes and socks

LOCKWOOD: Navy blue tux, cummerbund and bow tie, soft white shirt, black shoes and socks

WAGNER: Navy blue tux, vest and tie, white pleated shirt, black shoes and socks

CHUCK: Black tux, cummerbund and bow tie, white pleated shirt, black shoes and socks

MYRA: Dark green lace sheath evening dress, satin shoes to match, grey mink stole, white pearl bag, elbow length gloves

MCHENRY: Red and black tweed silk tux jacket, black tux pants, cummerbund and tie to match jacket, black shoes and socks

MARGE: Henna satin full skirted evening gown, shoes to match, white pearl bag and gloves

ACT III

HELEN: Same as Act II—Scene 2

AMY: Same as Act II—Scene 2

LOCKWOOD: Same as Act II—Scene 2. 1st change: Same as Act I—Scene 2 except white shirt, red striped bow tie
UNDERHILL: Same as Act II—Scene 2
DOUG: Same as Act II—Scene 2
CHUCK: Same as Act II—Scene 2
MARGE: Same as Act II—Scene 2
WAGNER: Same as Act II—Scene 2
McHENRY: Same as Act II—Scene 2